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TO

THE KING'S

MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

SIRE,

Under the protection of their Sovereign and Parliament, the East-India Company has been the instrument of acquiring those vast possessions, declared by the Act of 1833, to be Your Majesty's Indian Territories.

That measure suggested the preparation of a Work which, divested of all commercial detail, would comprise within moderate

limits, a narrative of the leading political events connected with the Rise and Progress of the British Power in India.

Your Majesty having graciously condescended to countenance the attempt—the first Volume is now humbly submitted to Your Majesty. It records the names, with an outline of the services, of some of those eminent men, whose advice in council and valour in the field laid the foundation of the British Empire in the East.

The Second Volume will commence with the establishment of a System, which not only gave permanence and stability to the East-India Company, but enabled it to call forth the services of those illustrious Statesmen and Soldiers who raised the superstructure of that Empire, which still remains under the government of the Company, and forms so stupendous and splendid a monument of national enterprize.

Although the Company exercises no political power in this country, it has evinced on all occasions of national contest or internal commotion, an anxious desire to uphold the Sovereign Authority, and has manifested the most devoted attachment to YOUR MAJESTY'S Royal House and Person.

That the blessings of British Rule, may be long enjoyed and fully appreciated throughout every portion of the varied and widely extended dominions under YOUR MAJESTY'S mild and paternal sway, is the prayer of

YOUR MAJESTY'S
Most dutiful and
Loyal Subject,
PETER AUBER.

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PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

WHILE preparing, in the year 1825, the 'Analysis of the Constitution of the East-India Company,' I experienced the want of a work treating progressively of the political events that had occurred in India, with a statement of the laws passed by Parliament for the government of the Company's affairs; together with the views and opinions of the Home Authorities on the proceedings of their servants abroad.

There were numerous publications, referring to detached portions of India affairs. The History of British India by the late James Mill, Esq., was the first attempt to compass in one work the various subjects comprised in so extensive a field. It presents an instance of indefatigable perseverance, and exhibits the peculiar views of the gifted and lamented author. It is matter of regret—a regret of which I know that gentleman himself

himself partook—that he had not an opportunity, when writing his history, which terminates in 1805, of consulting the documents that subsequently came under his official cognizance and care.

In the course of my researches, amidst the voluminous records at the India-House, I made various memoranda, with the intention when leisure offered of preparing a work in the present form. The pressure of business preparatory to the discussion on the Charter in 1833, and the arrangements consequent on the passing of the Act, in order to give effect to its provisions, which did not come into operation until April 1834, completely occupied the attention of the whole establishment.

The effects of the extraordinary change caused by the abandonment of all commercial operations, were felt in the great diminution of those duties, that had partaken of the combined character, heretofore sustained by the Company. Extensive reductions necessarily followed, some departments being wholly abolished, others partially reduced, and the entire establishment brought down to a scale that would ensure the largest saving, and at the same time provide for perfect efficiency.

These

These circumstances led to my assistant* proposing, under a sense of public duty, his retirement at the close of the year 1834. The same motive impelled me to propose my own retirement, with a view to a consolidation of offices, in December 1835.

I advert to these circumstances because an impression has arisen in connexion with the reductions alluded to, that the idea thrown out in the original Hints submitted by his Majesty's Ministers in February 1833, for reducing the number of the Directors, might have been acted upon with advantage to the public interests. The idea was wisely abandoned. There is no necessary connexion between the number of the Court of Directors, and the strength of the Home establishment. Were it possible, which it most certainly is not, that half the present number of officers and clerks could discharge the duties which now fall upon them, still the twenty-four Directors ought to be inviolably maintained: that number being based upon a principle which should never be lost sight of; while

* William Carter, Esq., a most honourable public servant. His retirement, as well as my own, was accompanied by that of some old and valued servants in the department.

while the strength of the establishment ought to be governed by the extent of duties it has to perform. The present number of the Executive Body is essential to its independence, and forms a security against the successful exertion of political or other influence operating to the prejudice of the great interests committed to its care.

An objection has been taken to the choice of so many Directors from gentlemen who have served in India, because they may have imbibed strong local prejudices. If the term *local prejudice* implies that those Directors have a feeling of attachment towards India and its population, it presents a recommendation; the real difficulty is in removing prejudice against and in creating an interest in matters relating to that country.

If the term be used as implying narrowness of views, caused by supposed confinement to local duties in a distant part of the world, why should an effect be produced on minds engaged in India in forming revenue settlements or fixing the bounds of a province—in administering justice amidst millions, or discharging the duties of a political Residency—in filling the office of a Member of Council, or that of Vice-President,—

or in taking a distinguished part as companions in arms with those illustrious individuals whose names are recorded in the history of their country, more than in that of parties who may be occupied in England in the settlement of tithes or parish rates, in fixing the limits of a turnpike trust, or discussing the merits of a railroad-bill?

Some reason might exist for the term, were all the members who have served in India to be chosen exclusively from one presidency, and from one particular branch of the service; but, so far from this being the fact, selections are made from all the three presidencies, and from every branch of the public service. Nor is the choice confined to gentlemen only who have been in the service; the election has fallen on parties who have resided in India, but wholly unconnected with the service.*

If any objection still remains, its force is neutralized

* A recent instance presents itself in the case of the Right Hon. Cutlar Fergusson, who was a member of the Bar at Calcutta, and was chosen a Director, on his return to this country, by the united suffrage of the Proprietors. That gentleman retired from the Direction, much to the regret of all parties, on re-assuming office with His Majesty's Ministers. The late Sir Hugh Inglis, Bart., had been in India, but not in the Company's service. The present Director, Sir Robert Campbell, Bart., is another instance.

lized by the introduction of gentlemen of high character possessing extensive mercantile and financial experience, having had no connexion with India. This is an advantage which offers additional reason for maintaining the present number, and for continuing a system that secures the various qualifications now brought to bear in deciding questions of great public as well as of personal interest.

Nor can any idea be more erroneous than that the duties devolved upon the Court since the Act of 1833 do not present sufficient matter to engage the attention of so many members. With the exception of questions which involve great constitutional changes in the establishments of the United Kingdom, those which come under the review of the co-ordinate authorities forming the Home system, for governing India, are of a more extended, varied, and complicated nature than any that generally occupy the attention of Parliament. Twenty-four Directors were not considered too many when the Company had commercial affairs only, and those of a very limited extent, to transact; neither was that number thought excessive when the Company possessed only one-third of the territory,

ritory, of the army, and of the population, now under their control and government.

The office of a Director of the East-India Company presents one of the most honourable and interesting positions in public life, and offers matter to engage the highest range of talent and the best powers of the mind, in a widely extended sphere of duty, comprising political, military, revenue, judicial, financial, legislative, ecclesiastical, and commercial subjects, not confined within narrow limits, where one decision will apply to the country at large, but calling for separate measures in distinct provinces, and different laws for a varying population in habits, manners, and customs.

The office is not one of pecuniary reward, but it is one which yields its possessor the means of an honourable provision for his family connexions and friends, with the enviable gratification of being enabled to confer obligations in quarters where educated and exemplary heads of large and amiable families have to contend with limited funds, and whose habits have precluded them from forming connexions to advance their families in the world. The children of the veteran soldier with

with honourable laurels, but scanty means—the widow's son and the destitute orphan, have participated in that patronage which, but for the maintenance of the Court of Directors, might have been applied to the most unconstitutional purposes, and certainly would never have reached those channels where it has been so philanthropically bestowed. The fact was admitted by Parliament during the discussions on the Charter, and I speak from personal knowledge of numerous instances of the most kind and generous acts of individual patronage.*

Although

* In the year 1774, the following curious petition was presented to the Directors:

"To the Honourable Court of Directors,

"Gentlemen:—I am a clergyman of Ely, in the county of Cambridge. I have a parcel of fine boys, but not cash to provide for them. My eldest son I intended for a pillar of the Church, and with this view I gave him a suitable education at school, and afterwards entered him at Cambridge, where he has resided the usual time, and last Christmas took his degrees with some reputation to himself. But I must at the same time add that he is more likely to kick a church down than to support one: he is of a very eccentric genius. He has no notion of restraint to Chapel-gates, Lectures, &c. &c., and when rebuked by his master, tutors, &c., for want of obedience to their rules, &c., he treated them in the most contemptible light, as if not being gentlemen, and seemed to intimate that he should call them to account as an affair of honour, &c. This soon disconcerted all my plans for him, and on talking with him the other

Although the subject will be noticed when the present system comes under review at the close of the Second Volume of this work, I cannot refrain from adverting to one clause of the Act of the 3d and 4th William IV. cap. 85, which has immediate

other day, asking him what road his honour would choose to pursue in future life, he told me his plan was to go into the India service. Upon being interrogated whether he had any reasonable expectation of a provision from that quarter, he looked small and said no. Now, gentlemen, I know no more of you than you do of me, and therefore it is not unlikely but that you will look upon me as chimerical a man as my son, in making this application to you: but you will remember that he is my son, and that reflection, I hope, will be deemed a sufficient apology. I want your advice, now; therefore not knowing any individual amongst you, I apply to you as a body. If he will suit your service and you can help me, do. He is now about twenty, near six feet high, well made, stout and very active, and as bold and intrepid as a lion. He is of a Welch extraction for many generations, and I think as my first-born he is not degenerated. If you like to look at him you shall see him and judge for yourselves; you may leave word with your clerk. I shall call again shortly to hear what you say, and am in the mean time,

"Gentlemen,

"Black Bull Inn, "Yours, &c. in haste,
"Bishopsgate Street, (Signed) "THOMAS JONES."
"3d March 1774."

"N.B. If you like him I will equip him, &c."

One of the Members of the Direction gave the young man a cadetship.

diate reference to the civil patronage of the Company. I do not believe that it has yet been acted upon. Before the plan devised by the Marquis of Wellesley in 1800, for the establishment of the Calcutta College, there was no test required from parties previously to their being appointed Writers. They simply produced a certificate that they had been educated in writing and accounts, and were desirous "of serving their Honours." The same kind of petition was presented by Mr. Hastings, by Mr. Shore (afterwards Lord Teignmouth), by the late Charles Grant, Esq., by Sir George Barlow, by the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, and by distinguished members of the service who, after filling high posts in the governments abroad, are now devoting their valuable experience to the same objects at home, in their places as Directors. Whatever may have been the demands of the public service, it must be admitted that fit instruments were found to meet those demands.

The plan of Lord Wellesley was superseded by the establishment of the East-India College in this country, in the year 1805. By the Act of 1813, each party, before his nomination as a Writer,

Writer, was required to pass four terms at the College.*

That institution, and the regulations for its government, have afforded matter for repeated discussions, in the Court of Proprietors and elsewhere.

In the year 1826, the East-India College was not adequate to supply the wants of the public service. The Act of 7 Geo. IV. was accordingly passed, which admitted of the nomination of parties as Writers who should pass a given test before four examiners, two being appointed for that purpose by each of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge; the ages of the candidates not to exceed that prescribed by the Acts of 1784 and 1793,† *viz.* twenty-two years.

The wants that called for the remedy having been supplied, the Act expired, and the exclusive system of passing through the College was reverted to; but to render it more palatable, and to give the service of India all the benefit of general education elsewhere, it was declared sufficient for a party to have resided either one or two terms, instead

* 53 Geo. III., cap. 155, sec. 46.

† 33 Geo. III., cap. 52, sec. 60.

instead of four, provided he passed the final examination. Some instances of valuable instruments, who had come from the Universities, being appointed under the revised plan, have lately occurred.

With these facts upon record, it is difficult to imagine what can have led to the introduction of the 103d section, cap. 85, in the Act of the 3d and 4th of His present Majesty; unless indeed its object was to render the civil patronage as little grateful to the nominating parties as possible, if so, it will be most effectually attained whenever the scheme shall come into operation. The general outline of the Ministerial plan of 1833 was the result of a comprehensive and enlightened view of the vast subject then brought forward; but many of the details were framed in haste, and apparently without due consideration of the effects that would follow their adoption.

The age of each of the candidates to fill one vacant nomination to the College is not to exceed twenty-two years; but the Acts of 1784 and 1793 provide that no party shall be appointed a *writer* whose age exceeds twenty-two years. Residence therefore at the College, under the new Act, is

out

out of the question for a party of the extreme age admitted by that Act. At all events, there is a discrepancy that requires correction. Again, the period of one month only is allowed to a Director to find out four candidates, and this is to be done in the months of July and August, a period of the year of all others the least likely for candidates to be found, and if they are not produced the nomination falls to the Board! The remotest idea of imputing any sinister intention when the plan was devised is utterly disclaimed, but the result is clear: for supposing thirty vacancies, the Directors in one month must be prepared with 120 youths, who are ready to risque their academic reputation for thirty problematical prizes.

To avoid this, the Directors may send up ninety youths who may happen to be at home for the holidays from some of the seminaries in the country, to compete with thirty comparative veterans, and the Act would be complied with, while the real intention would be entirely defeated.

The plan prescribed by the Act is unattainable in principle, and would be open to intrigue and injustice when put in practice. A proper test and

public examination seems all that is really requisite to ensure well qualified servants.

As the governing body in the India system, the Directors have the origination of *principle*. This is a most important point. Their acts, it is true, are subject to revision by the Board of Commissioners, but the Directors possess the means of making the public judges of those acts through the medium of the Court of Proprietors, should extreme measures or differences of opinion render such a proceeding expedient. If the powers both of the executive and constituent bodies are more circumscribed by the late Act, they are still of a character to be applied with much force and effect.

If the past experience of their government be taken as an earnest for the future, there is ample warrant to anticipate the most beneficial results. The testimony of that great man (whose services will be hereafter noticed), when speaking of the Company's government, not from mere report but from long personal experience; at a time when the Company had the honour to number him amongst their servants, and who in that capacity set an example of the strictest subordination,

nation, when the policy of a measure was opposed to his own conviction;—who exhibited entire devotion to the public service, when personal interest would have decided otherwise;—who evinced a foresight as extraordinary in planning and devising measures and operations, as promptitude, energy, and success in carrying them into execution;—who laid down a system for the management and conduct of the various branches of the public service, which simplified the most complicated and important matters, whilst the most minute and apparently unimportant were not forgotten;—who observed an extraordinary regularity in his public accounts, amidst unceasing engagements, requiring continued exertion both of body and mind;—and whose acquaintance with the general affairs and political relations of the Company was not less conspicuous than his military achievements,—this eminently competent eye-witness declared, from what he saw at the time, and from what he had since seen, that it was one of the best and most purely administered governments, and one which had provided most effec-

tually for the happiness of the people over which it was placed.*

Another gentleman then in office at the India Board, and now filling a high station in the Council of India, declared his astonishment at discovering the effects of a government and a system of which he had formed a very different opinion. †

One of the leading characteristics in the government of the East-India Company is freedom from party or political feeling: it is desired to observe the same spirit in this work. After all, the subject is so vast, that scarcely any one work can give more than a brief connected detail. To aid the attention in taking a glance at the history of India, from the commencement of hostilities with the French in 1745, the subsequent period may be divided into ten decades. At

* Parliamentary Debates, July 1835. In the reference I have here made to the Duke of Wellington's services, I have strictly confined myself to those rendered in India. They formed a true presage of his Grace's subsequent illustrious career.

† Debate in the Commons on the second reading of the India Bill, 11th of July 1833.

At the beginning of each, or within a very short time, some marked event took place:

1745-6. The commencement of hostilities with the French on the coast of Coromandel.*

1755-6. The affair of the Black-hole, and the expedition to Calcutta under Clive and Watson.†

1765. The acquisition of the Dewanny.‡

1774. The Regulating Act; a Governor-general appointed, and a Supreme Court of Judicature created.§

1784. The establishment of the Board of Commissioners.

1793. The renewal of the Charter; the Board of Commissioners placed upon a permanent footing, with salaries to the President and Commissioners.

1804. The termination of the Marquis Wellesley's brilliant administration, including the fall of Seringapatam, the expulsion of the French, and the subjugation of the Mahrattas.

1814. The renewal of the Charter; the opening of the India trade; the introduction of an Episcopal establishment; the commencement

* Page 47. † Page 54.
‡ Page 146. § Page 442.

ment of the Marquis Hastings' administration, and Nipaul war.

1824. The Burmese war.

1834. The East-India Company relinquish commercial operations; surrender all their property to the Crown, and retain the government of India. The abolition of suttee, and termination of Lord William Bentinck's administration,

I have purposely introduced, in the first chapter, some extracts to show the state of the Company's early political relations. It must be remembered, that until the late great change, the East-India Company possessed no other pecuniary means than what they derived from the combined result of their territorial and commercial receipts. In the course of the national contests in which Great Britain was involved, the Company were frequently much embarrassed. They obtained at times unwilling aid from Parliament, at the instance of the Minister who disputed their claims to reimbursement for outlay on account of his Majesty's Government, when the national exchequer was severely pressed, and the Company's exigencies

exigencies most felt, there being no demand, either at home or abroad, for the produce in their warehouses.

These were the reasons why the Directors contended for the maintenance of the Company's exclusive privileges in all their integrity. Had concessions been made, they felt that there was no limit at which to stop, their sole dependence being on their own resources. India, including the Home Establishment, with that of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, has never been a direct charge on England. Hence the orders to the governments abroad were sometimes couched in terms grating to minds unaccustomed to the tediousness of detail and formal minutiæ of a peaceful administration, "formed on a commercial basis."

The First Volume of this work refers to the early period of Indian history, and of the Company's establishment. It comprises the administration of Lord Clive, with the intermediate governments in Bengal and at Madras and Bombay, and closes with that of Mr. Hastings. Most of what relates to Lord Clive's government had been prepared from the official documents before the life of his Lordship

Lordship was published. I mention this, because I am gratified to find that my views are generally supported by those of the gallant and regretted author of that work.

The Second Volume will open with the Establishment of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India; a measure which preserved the Company's political existence, and tended to check, and gradually to eradicate the evils that had arisen from the want of power on the part of the Executive Body to enforce obedience to their orders.

The important proceedings of the India Government, which gave effect to the revisions contemplated by the Act of 1784, will be gradually developed. The principles by which the Supreme Council were guided will be traced out, together with the course of splendid achievements which marked the progress of the British power, under the several eminent personages who presided in the respective governments. The result exhibits the extraordinary fact that the Company, whose representatives hesitated at one time to address a Nabob of one of the provinces, now hold the Great Mogul himself as a pensioner upon those revenues, which

which through their instrumentality have become the property of the British crown.* An Outline of the Indian System as it exists under the altered character of the Company, will likewise be given.

The scheme of his Majesty's Ministers was explained and supported in an able and luminous exposition by the President of the Board, in February 1833.† The Proprietors closed with the proposition, and accepted the revenues of India as security for their capital, and payment of the dividend, on condition that the Company retained the government. Of the competency of India to sustain all the just demands upon her exchequer, no doubt is entertained: "a country with an increasing revenue of twenty-two millions, a territory almost unlimited in extent, a soil rich and fertile, and suited to every kind of produce, with

* A map of India is prefixed, in order to show the possessions acquired by the Company at the close of Mr. Hastings' government in 1784, as also the native states which existed as substantive powers at that time.

The Second Volume will contain a map prepared upon a similar principle, brought down to the present time; also a map exhibiting the routes of Steam Navigation with India.

† The Right Hon. Chas. Grant, now Lord Glenelg.

with a people capable of great improvement, and both frugal and industrious."

But the Proprietors must not forget that capital and skill are the means, and judgment and energy the qualifications essential to apply those means in the mode best calculated to ensure the anticipated benefits.

No endeavour should be omitted to awaken an interest in a country, which has doubtless been brought under British dominion for higher ends than mere pecuniary advantage, although instances of the benefits derived in that point of view may be traced throughout the United Kingdom: for there is scarcely a county without resident families who owe, either remotely or immediately, their fortune, or pecuniary means, to the establishment of the East-India Company, and the acquisition of India.

If this work, which is almost wholly founded on official records, shall in any degree answer the purpose, one of the objects I have had in encountering the labour of preparing it for publication will be attained. It may likewise prove an useful introduction to more extended researches by individuals who shall hereafter enter the Company's service,

service, or to those who may resort to India for other purposes.

As the attempt has been graciously countenanced by the Sovereign, I feel that I shall but manifest the respect which I bear towards the Company, by announcing to the Proprietors individually the progress of a work, the first volume of which is now sent forth to the public.

LONDON, *April* 1837.

MAP
By I. Walker
Showing the
TERRITORIAL POSSESSIONS
IN 1784.
To illustrate the
RISE & PROGRESS
of the British Power in India.

Published by W.H. Allen & Co. Leadenhall Street April 14th 1831.

RISE AND PROGRESS

OF THE

BRITISH POWER IN INDIA.

CHAPTER I.

Early history.

In contemplating the History of India, abundant matter to awaken, if not to satisfy curiosity, as to its earliest condition and chronology, is to be found in the works of those distinguished scholars and historians, who have presented the public with their valuable researches on the various kingdoms of Asia.

Confining the retrospect to the limits within which reference can be had to historical facts, it is impossible not to be most forcibly struck with the extraordinary vicissitudes and revolutions to which Hindostan has been subject. Governed for a series of years by a Maharajah, or prince who exercised supreme authority, and by various feudatory but powerful native chiefs; having a priest-

hood assuming a lofty tone of morality, possessing great influence over the people, and acting as counsellors to their rulers, the Hindoo power, notwithstanding the early invasion of Alexander,* remained comparatively secure until the irruption of the Moslems, whose troops were led to the territories on the Indus within the third century after the rise of that scourge of the human race, the followers of the prophet, whose flight from Mecca, A.D. 622, gives date to the Hijrah. In thirty-one years from that period, besides Arabia, the kingdoms of Persia, Egypt, and Syria, were subjugated by their arms, and in the year 673 they entered the country beyond the Oxus.

Mahomedan irruption.

The five great princes, who are represented to have united their forces against the earliest invasions

* "I take it for granted, that Alexander crossed the Indus (about 327 years before Christ, according to Usher, and in the month of May), at or near the place where the city of Attock now stands: because, first, it appears to have been, in all ages, the pass on the Indus leading from the countries of Cabul and Candahar into India; and this is strongly indicated by the circumstance of Acbar's building the fortress of Attock to command it. Mr. Fraser, in his history of Nadir Shah, says, 'there is but one place where an army can conveniently be transported, the stream being so rapid in most parts. There is a castle commanding that passage, called the castle of Attock.' Attock, then, must stand on or near the site of the Taxila of Alexander. Taxila must necessarily have been very near the Indus, to allow of its being one hundred and twenty miles from the Hydaspes, or Chelum. See Pliny's Indian Itinerary, book vi."—*Major Rennell's Memoir of Hindostan.*

sions of Hindostan by the Mahomedans, were those of Lahore, Delhi, Ajmere, Kanouje, and Callinjer, all included in Northern Hindostan.

The more southern part was full of impregnable hills and castles, which were tenanted by the daring race of Rajpoots. The multitude of these forts, built on lofty and almost perpendicular eminences of rock or mountain, so common in India, affords sufficient evidence of the distractions which, in ancient periods, prevailed amidst the endless contests of ambitious chieftains.

In the tenth century, three lines of Mahomedan princes arose, whose successors established themselves in Hindostan.

The first was that of the Gaznavides, so called from Gazna, the capital of a province in the neighbourhood of Candahar. They continued from about A.D. 1000 to 1157, when they were expelled from their Indian conquests by the Gaurides, from Gaur, a province to the north of Gazna. The Charazmians, from Charazm, the capital of their kingdom, succeeded A.D. 1212; and they were defeated by Genghis Khan in 1221.

Lines of Mahomedan princes.

During the whole of the Gaznavian dynasty, as well as the dynasties of Gaur and Charazm, India boasted no supreme head. The dignity of Maharajah had become merely nominal. He might take the field, and was reverenced as chief; but he possessed no decisive power to control the different factions that had arisen and convulsed the country,

the provinces having been partitioned among the superior line of rajahs who headed or ruled over them. The unsatiated invaders from the western frontiers, as long as their tyranny lasted, were the lords paramount of India. The tribute was regularly transmitted to Gazna, or Gaur, by such of the Indian chieftains as desired peace, numerous armies of Afghauns being ready to pour down upon any who might manifest resistance.

Deccan invaded.

The DECCAN, or Southern Peninsula, remained in quiet subjection to its ancient chiefs of Indian descent until 1293, when it was first invaded by Alla-ud-Deen, the Mahomedan governor of Kurrah, a country bordering on the Deccan, near Ellichpoor.

Timour's conquest of Delhi.

At the close of the fourteenth century, the celebrated Timour "planted the Tartarian standard on the imperial towers of Delhi." On returning to his own country, he committed the government of his new conquests to two viceroys, Pir Mahommed and Chizer Khan. The latter contested successfully for the sceptre. The Tartar government having become odious, both to the Mahomedan chiefs and native princes of India, they emancipated themselves from its yoke in 1493, about which period the Usbecks invaded Great Bokhara, and constrained Baber, the descendant of Timour, to abdicate the throne of Tartary and seek refuge at Gazna. In this retirement he contemplated the invasion of Northern Hindostan and the conquest

quest of Delhi. The Afghauns and the great rajahs of the country opposed his progress, but his valour and perseverance overcame every obstacle, and on the 1st May 1526, Baber, a fugitive from his own country, ascended the Mogul throne, one hundred and thirty years after the conquest by Timour. Humaioon, son of Baber, carried his arms into Malwa and Guzerat, where Sultan Bahauder reigned. The latter, in order to defeat the advance of Humaioon, granted the port of Diu to the Portuguese, in consideration of their aiding him against the invader. Here we perceive the first footing obtained by an European power in India.

Emperor Baber.

Portuguese settle at Diu.

Humaioon was subsequently driven to seek safety in Lahore by a revolt of the Afghauns, which took place under Shere Khan, during the emperor's absence from Delhi. He died in 1556. His son, Akbar, then only fourteen years of age, was proclaimed king by the chiefs who had accompanied his father to Lahore, and was crowned at Delhi in 1558. He raised Agra to great splendour, as a royal city, in 1570. During his reign Bengal was reduced, siege was laid to Patna and Allahabad, Guzerat was subdued, Ahmedabad was fortified, and the greater part of the Deccan, with the kingdoms of Viziapore and Golconda, were brought under his arms.

Akbar.

Abul Fazil, the soldier and historian, enjoyed the full confidence of Akbar, and took an active part

Abul Fazil murdered.

part in the operations in the Deccan. On the revolt of Selim, the emperor's son, Abul Fazil being summoned by Akbar to Delhi, was murdered whilst on his way to obey the commands of his master.

Jehaungier. Selim proffered submission to his father, and succeeded to the throne at the close of the year 1605, by the title of Jehaungier. He also experienced the revolt of his eldest son, two of whose companions in the rebellion were condemned to suffer death.* In 1607 the emperor marched against Caubul. He reduced the refractory Afghauns, and afterwards prosecuted the war against the Nizam and the Deccan.

Shah Jehan, his son, succeeded him in 1628. An insurrection in the Deccan, under Lodi, an omrah of the highest distinction, called forth the exertions of the Emperor, who sent an army to oppose him, but at the same time offered terms of pardon, which Lodi imprudently accepted. He was made governor of Malwa, and subsequently invited to the court at Delhi, where he was treated with great indignity. The apprehension of assassination induced him to flee from the court to Malwa. Having withstood the troops sent after him

* It is stated that one was sewn up in the raw hide of an ox, which, as it contracted by the heat of the sun, caused suffocation; the other was sewn up in the hide of an ass, but his friends having kept it moist by continually wetting it, his life was preserved, and he was ultimately pardoned.

him and obliged them to relinquish their pursuit, he traversed the provinces of Bahar and Oude on his way to Golconda, and ultimately reached Dowlatabad, where the Nizam received him with open arms.

This conduct of the Nizam gave the Emperor an opportunity, for which he had long sought, of renewing his efforts to bring the Deccan into complete subjection. The Sovereign of Bejapoor, the King of Hydrabad and Talingana, and the Nizam, king of the Deccan, confederated in support of Lodi; but the arms of the Emperor prevailed, and Lodi was cut to pieces. The confederates were ultimately reinstated in their possessions, upon condition of their acknowledging the Emperor and his successor to be lords paramount of the Deccan.

Aurungzebe. Aurungzebe, the third son of Shah Jehan, although naturally ambitious, concealed his real character and intentions under the assumed rigidity of a fakir. He was appointed to govern the Deccan in 1638. In 1658, through treachery towards his two brothers and by imprisoning his father, he obtained the imperial throne. He made considerable conquests in the Peninsula, and engaged in hostilities with the Mahrattas.

Rise of the Mahrattas. The latter power arose in 1628, under Sevajee, who in 1661 had made a conquest of the whole of the coast of the Concan, comprising the country from Goa to Demaun. He died in 1680, and was succeeded

succeeded by Sambajee, who having taken under his protection the rebel son of Aurungzebe, the troops of the latter proceeded against him. The Emperor having obtained possession of his person by bribery, offered him his pardon if he would embrace the Mahomedan religion. Sambajee indignantly rejected the offer; upon which his tongue was torn out. Still refusing to purchase mercy at the expense of his faith, the inhuman Emperor caused his heart to be cut out.

Aurungzebe died in 1707. His conduct had exasperated the Mahrattas, who, under their chief Sahojee, overran and plundered the greater part of Hindostan. In 1735 they obtained authority to collect the *chout*, or fourth-part of the net revenues of all the provinces of the empire, excepting that of Bengal. At the death of Sahojee in 1740, their territories extended from the Western Ocean to Orissa, and from Agra to the Carnatic, being one thousand miles in length and seven hundred wide. Their capital was Sattarah. There were two principal leaders: Ballojee, the Peishwa or vicegerent, who resided at Poona, was looked upon as the chief; the other, Ragojee Boonslah, was the bukshi or commander-in-chief, who resided at Nagpoor in Berar. These two parties divided the kingdom; but the Ram Rajah, or Rajah of Sattarah, was considered the supreme prince, as he bestowed a khelat on the accession of the Peishwa. Ballojee died in 1761, and was succeeded

Collect the chout.

succeeded by Mhaderao, mention of whom will be found in the early political transactions of the Company. Narrain Rao succeeded in 1773: on his death he was followed by Ragobah, his uncle, who was the cause of the protracted hostilities between the Bombay presidency and the Mahrattas, which will be noticed hereafter.

Ragojee Boonslah was succeeded by Janojee in 1749; and Moodajee, the son of Janojee's younger brother, succeeded in 1775.

Of the other Mahratta chiefs, some rose to eminence, and became formidable enemies to the British power.

The first was SCINDIAH. A part of the province of Malwa, which had been separated from the Mogul dominions about 1732, was awarded to him by a grant from the Rajah of Sattarah, Oojein being his capital. Scindiah.

The second was HOLKAR, who likewise obtained a considerable part of Malwa, his capital being Indore. The province of Kandeish was partitioned between the Peishwa, Scindiah, and Holkar. Holkar.

The third chieftain was FUTTY SING, generally called the Guicowar. He divided Guzerat with the Peishwa. Guicowar.

The fourth was PURSERAM BHOW, the Rajah of Colapore

The fifth was the RASTIA family, long settled in the Concan.

This

This outline of the several native states, when the European nations opened an intercourse with the East by sea, and formed establishments there, may serve as an introduction to a political narrative of the rise and progress of the BRITISH POWER in that quarter of the globe: a power which has been more widely extended throughout the continent of India than any that preceded, whether native or European.

British Power.

In connection with this fact it should be recollected, that the acquisition of our eastern possessions was not effected by the collective forces of this nation, but by the EAST-INDIA COMPANY, who form the most extraordinary chartered body that has existed in any nation. They were incorporated in the year 1600 by Queen Elizabeth, who had supported the Dutch republic as a barrier against the House of Austria. England perceived the advantages which accrued both to Portugal and Holland by their trade with Asia round the Cape, and became desirous to participate in that lucrative traffic. Individual means or enterprize were unequal to such an undertaking: 'the attempt could not be made but on a joint stock.' The LONDON COMPANY was accordingly formed, for the purpose of extending the commerce and navigation of this country. They continued without a rival until 1698, when the necessities of the state led to the formation of the ENGLISH COMPANY. The measure being proposed to Parliament,

Established by the East-India Company.

Parliament, the LONDON COMPANY presented the following petition to the House of Commons in support of their privileges.

To the Honble. the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses, in Parliament assembled;

The humble Petition of the Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East-Indies, in a General Court assembled,

Humbly Sheweth:

That your Petitioners have the sole trade to the East-Indies granted them by several Charters of Queen Elizabeth, and other his Majesty's Royal Predecessors, and those Charters confirmed by his present Majesty, wherein his Majesty has been graciously pleased to grant your Petitioners the said trade for twenty-one years, from November 1693, under many regulations, agreed upon by this Honourable House, and to direct an additional subscription of £744,000 to the stock for the better carrying on their trade, and making it more national and extensive, which regulations are submitted unto, and the said £744,000 subscribed and paid in by a great number of new adventurers, since which subscription your Petitioners have suffered very severely in the loss of twelve ships, that would have produced here a very great sum of money.

That your Petitioners, by reason of these losses, have reaped no benefit from their said subscription; and yet have paid £85,443. 6*s*. 6*d*. in taxes for their stock during the war, besides the taxes for this year, £295,029. 13*s*. 4*d*. in customs; since the said subscription have also advanced among themselves, after their losses, great sums of money for carrying on their trade, and preserving the advantage thereof to the nation, and have likewise served his Majesty and the Government on sundry occasions.

That

That your Petitioners did not doubt (their losses by war and other the premises considered) but they should enjoy the benefit of their trade in time of peace; whereas, instead thereof, they are informed, a proposal is given in to a Committee of this Honourable House, of a loan to be made by persons not interested in the said Company, so as they may have the sole trade to India, China, &c., exclusive of all others; which proposal tends to the utter destruction of your Petitioners' right.

And forasmuch as your Petitioners are in possession of the said trade, have a revenue at Fort St. George and Bombay of about £30,000 a-year, another at Fort St. David's of above £6,000 per annum, which are daily increasing, and large extent of lands in both places; have also above £3,300 a-year paid them by the Persians, and the perpetual inheritance of Bombay and St. Helena, by several grants from the Crown of England; have likewise divers forts, settlements, and territories on the island of Sumatra, without which the pepper trade would be entirely lost to this nation; have also a strong fortification in Bengal, and several other factories (some of them fortified), buildings, settlements, privileges and immunities in many places within the limits of their trade, all which are their absolute propriety, and have cost them immense sums of money for the purchase and grants from Indian princes and others, and for the strengthening, and other expenses thereof.—23d May 1698.

Notwithstanding this appeal, the necessities of the state were such that the New Company was formed under the title of the ENGLISH EAST-INDIA COMPANY. They, however, found that they could not compete with experience, added to possessions and capital, and at the recommendation of his Majesty

Majesty King William the Third, the two Companies agreed to form one society, to be designated "THE UNITED COMPANY OF MERCHANTS OF ENGLAND TRADING TO THE EAST-INDIES." The Company consisted of all persons holding a share in the capital stock, then amounting to £2,000,000. Every individual, whether male or female, possessing £500 stock, either in his or her own right or otherwise, was entitled to vote and to take part in discussions in the meeting of Proprietors, who when assembled were termed by the charter a "GENERAL COURT OF PROPRIETORS." The Proprietors were to elect out of their body, every year, twenty-four members, each possessed of £2,000 stock, to be Directors of the Company. Thirteen members formed a quorum, and when assembled for business were termed a "COURT OF DIRECTORS." By the charter four General Courts are to be held in the year, each quarterly. A committee was to be chosen to frame by-laws for the government of the Company, which laws have the same force as those framed by Parliament, when not opposed to any existing Act.*

* In order to facilitate the transaction of the Company's affairs, the charter empowered the Directors to form themselves into committees.

1616. IN the year 1616, the Company were confined, on the continent of India, to Surat and Amadavad, in the Mogul's dominions; to Calicut, on the Malabar coast; and to Masulipatam, on the Coromandel coast.

1625. In 1625, their agents at Bantam,* in Java, suggested to the authorities in Europe the expediency of directing their attention to the trade on the Coromandel coast, and at the close of the season despatched a vessel from Batavia to Masulipatam with a cargo. They also fixed on a station at Armagon, between Nellore and Pullicat. In 1638, the situation of Armagon being considered unfavourable for increasing the Company's commerce, Mr. Day, one of the council at Masulipatam, selected Madraspatam; the Naig of that district having offered, provided the English would settle there, to erect a fort at his own cost, and to exempt them from all customs on trade. So much importance was attached to securing this position, that, without waiting for instructions from England, a fortification was commenced at the expense of the Company; the fort receiving the name of FORT ST. GEORGE, the town retaining its original appellation.

Fort St. George first settled.

1653. In 1653, Fort St. George was raised to the rank of a presidency; and, on the application of the Company,

* Bantam, at this early period, was one of the Company's principal settlements to the eastward.

Company, in 1667, was incorporated by royal charter from his Majesty King Charles II.

Surat and Bombay. 1661-1687.

The island of Bombay, ceded by the crown of Portugal to King Charles II., as a part of the dowry of the Infanta Catherine, was, in 1688, granted by the King to the Company; and, in 1687, was constituted the chief seat of the British government in India, all the other settlements being declared subordinate to it.

1698. English. French. Dutch.

At the conclusion of the seventeenth century, the English in Bengal were settled at Calcutta, the French at Chandernagore, and the Dutch at Chinsurah, all situated on the river Hooghly.

BENGAL.

The Rajahs of the country surrounding those settlements having revolted against the Mogul government, and plundered several towns belonging to the Nabob of Bengal, the three European nations, for their own defence, immediately fortified their settlements. Aurungzebe, then Emperor, sent one of his grandsons to suppress the rebellion, and to superintend the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa; through whom the English obtained permission, in 1698, to purchase from the Indian proprietors the villages of Soota Nutty, Calcutta, and Govindpore, on which ground the city of Calcutta now stands. A fort was ordered to be built, and, in compliment to his Majesty King William III., it was denominated FORT WILLIAM.

In 1712, the Company having acquired several additional factories for the prosecution of their trade

BENGAL. trade, and expended large sums in maintaining their interests against the influence of the Dutch, petitioned parliament for an extension of their commercial privileges. After considerable opposition the exclusive right of trade was continued to them until 1733. In order to secure a greater degree of protection from the native powers, an embassy was despatched from Calcutta to the 1715-1745. Emperor Ferrokshere at Delhi in 1715. It consisted of two of the most intelligent factors at the presidency.

The progress of the embassy presents a curious, specimen of diplomacy. The following extract is given from the reports made to the authorities at Calcutta, by the deputation to the Emperor, as the Mogul or King was then designated.

Our last to your Honours, &c. was from Agra the 24th ultimo, which place we left the same day. We passed through the country of the Jaats with success, not meeting with much trouble, except that once in the night, rogues came on our camp, but being repulsed three times they left us. We were met on the 3d July by Padre Stephanus bringing two Seerpaws, which were received with the usual ceremony by John Surman and Cojah Surpaud.

The 4th, we arrived at Barrapoola, three coss from the city, sending the Padre before to prepare our reception, that if possible we might visit the King the first day, even before we went to the house which was got for us. Accordingly, the 7th in the morning we made our entry with very good order, there being sent a munsubdar of 2,000 munsub, with about 200 horse and peons to meet us, bringing likewise two elephants and flags. About the middle

middle of the city we were met by Synd Sallabut Caun Behauder, and were by him conducted to the palace, where we waited till about twelve o'clock, till the King came out, before which time we met with Caundora Behauder, who received us very civilly, assuring us of his protection and good services. We prepared for our first present, *viz.* 100 gold mohurs; the table-clock set with precious stones; the unicorn's horn; the gold scrutoire bought from Tendy Caun; the large piece of ambergris; the aflo, and chellumche manilla work; and the map of the world: these, with the Honourable the Governor's letter, were presented, every one holding something in his hand as usual. Considering the great pomp and state of the kings of Hindostan, we were very well received. On our arrival at our house, we were entertained by Synd Sallabut Caun, sufficient both for us and our people; in the evening he visited us again, and stayed about two hours. The great favour Caundora is in with the king, gives us hopes of success in this undertaking; he assures us of his protection, and says the king has promised us very great favours. We have received orders, first, to visit Caundora as our patron, after which we shall be ordered to visit the grand Vizier, and other Omrahs. We would have avoided this if we could, fearing to disoblige the Vizier; but finding it not feasible, rather than disoblige one who has been so serviceable, and by whose means we expect to obtain our desires, we comply with it.—*Delhi, or Sha Jehanabad, July 8th* 1715.

Your Honour, &c. was before informed that three days after our arrival at the city, the king left it under a pretence of worshipping at a noted place, six coss from Delhi, but his real design was to get clear from the fort, where he thought himself not so free to command, which he might be by this journey, as appeared after. He went round the city, eight or ten days, and the Omrahs petitioned him to

return, it being an unseasonable time to go further: he refused to consent, sometimes saying he would go to Lahore, and sometimes to Ajmere. We were startled at this news, looking back on the risk and trouble of bringing the present hither, although at the King's charge. How to remove it, or to pretend to enter on our negotiation without delivering it, we could not tell; but after due consideration, we concluded the best way was to deliver the present as fast as possible, though the King was abroad; and accordingly we carried all the japan scrutoires, japan earthen and lacquered ware, fire-arms, and cutlery ware, with us to the camp, and presented it. The second day, we delivered in a note for four hundred pieces of broad cloth, ordinary; the third day, another, for three hundred pieces aurora, and sixty pieces ordinary yellow: the following day, the fine reds, superfine scarlet, &c. after this, we returned to the city to prepare what was behind, and brought with us to the camp five standing clocks, twelve looking-glasses, and the map fitted up, which were presented; but after his Majesty's perusal, the clocks were ordered to be sent back to us, to be taken care of till he returned to the city: this order hindered us from delivering any more goods. Since the King gave out he designed to proceed no farther than about forty coss from Delhi, to a noted place for worship, from whence he would immediately return, we concluded that we ought to attend his Majesty, leaving Mr. Stephenson and Mr. Phillips to take care of the goods remaining in the city; that we should give notice to the several Omrahs we intend to present; and afterwards, under the favour of proceeding to commence our negotiation withal, in case the King should exceed the designed journey, that then Mr. Stephenson might hire carriages, and bring the goods after us. Pursuant to this consultation, we are now with his Majesty, twenty coss from the city: we are preparing our petitions

petitions to be delivered. God send they may meet with the desired success.

We have, from time to time on the way, and since our arrival there, desired sufficient supplies of money to enable us to go on with our business. It is impossible for us now to enlarge more on that head, but that it is certain, if we are not supplied, we shall be in no ways able to effect any thing at this court; all that we can possibly do is to advise your Honour, &c. of our pressing necessities. We were in hopes to supply our honourable masters with a large sum from the private goods with us, but the King's leaving the city, no merchant is to be had for them, so hitherto that method has been impracticable.—*Twenty coss from Delhi, 4th August* 1715.

The Mogul had suffered under a long illness. Mr. Hamilton, an English physician, had attended him, which created a strong feeling against us in the minds of the natives. Mr. Hamilton advises that his constitution is so manifestly mended, that he hopes in a few days to effect a perfect cure. This affair has made no little noise in this court, and although the King's doctors have made a great stir, to edge Mr. Hamilton out, yet by the particular influence of his Majesty's favour, and our patron's assistance, thanks be to God, all has been carried on very even, and his Majesty having made use of many and particularly favourable expressions to Coja Surpaud and Mr. Hamilton on this occasion, has given us such pleasing hopes that may fully recompense the delay that has been made hitherto. —*Delhi, Nov.* 8, 1715.

We wrote you the welcome news of the King's recovery. As a clear demonstration to the world, he washed himself the 23d, and accordingly received the congratulations of the whole court. As a reward for Mr. Hamilton's care

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and success, the King was pleased the 30th to give him in public, *viz.* a vest, a culgee set with precious stones, two diamond rings, an elephant, horse, and 5,000 rupees, besides ordering, at the same time, all his small instruments to be made in gold, *viz.* gold buttons for coat, waistcoat, and breeches, set with jewels: the same day Coja Surpaud received an elephant and vest as a reward for his attendance on this occasion. Monsieur Mar was to have received a reward the same day with Mr. Hamilton; but considering it was not for the credit of our nation to have any one joined with him, especially since he had no hand in the business, we got his reward deferred till three days afterwards, when he had a vest, elephant, and 1,000 rupees; a favour purely owing to his Majesty's generosity, and because he was his servant.

We have esteemed this a particular happiness, and hope it will prove ominous to the success of our affairs, it being the only thing that detained us hitherto from delivering our general petition; so pursuant to the orders we received from Caundora, the King's recovery was succeeded by the giving in the remainder of our present (reserving a small part only till the ceremony of his marriage should be over), and then delivered our petition to Caundora, by his means to be introduced to his Majesty. Synd Syllabut Caun, who has all along managed our affairs under Caundora, being at that instant and some time before much indisposed, we were obliged to carry it ourselves, without taking care to have his recommendation annexed. Since the delivery, Coja Surpaud has been frequently with Caundora, to remind him of introducing it to his Majesty, but has always been informed no business can go forward till the solemnization of the King's wedding is over, when he has promised a speedy despatch. All offices have been shut up

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for some days, and all business in the kingdom must naturally subside to this approaching ceremony; so that we cannot repine at the delay.—*Delhi, 7th Dec.* 1715.

A phirmaund, or royal grant, having been issued conferring additional privileges upon the Company, Calcutta was declared an independent presidency, accountable only to the Directors at home. BENGAL. 1715.

Jaffier Khan was at this time governor of Bengal, and subsequently obtained a grant of Bahar and Orissa. His conduct towards the English was tyrannical and extortionate. Having manifested an indisposition to obey the orders from the Mogul for the grants to the Company, the members of the embassy on their return to Cossimbusar, addressed the Council at Calcutta in the following terms:

We are entirely of your opinion that you ought not to acquiesce in Jaffer Cawn's refusing obedience to the King's royal orders, nor sit quiet under his disobedience of them: we never entertained such imaginations, but rather that he ought to be compelled to it by such means as your Honour, &c. think best.

You are sensible that no black servant in the country dare speak with that peremptoriness to so great a man as Jaffer Cawn, as sometimes the nature of our affairs require, on which consideration we ourselves went in person to him, and showed him the phirmaund, and demanded the free use of the mint as before advised. Mr. Feake disputed the point himself with Jaffer Cawn in the Indostan language, face to face, Eckeram Cawn Duan and others being present,

present, with ten or a dozen Munsubdars and several of the Mutsuddies, in a public court, who were all eye and ear witnesses to the smart and warm replies Mr. Feake at last made him: the whole Durbar was surprised, and several whispered to Coja Delaun with a seeming fear in what the dispute might end. Jaffer Cawn remained silent for some time, and then ordered beetle to be brought, and despatched us with a few sweetening words, that we would rest satisfied he should not be our enemy, but see what was to be done, and the like, which is a customary cajole he uses to get rid of company he don't like, as was plain he did not ours, for he never had so much said to his face since he has been a Duan or Subah, nor does he usually give any one such an opportunity. Nothing that was necessary to be said or done remained, but giving the duhoy, which experience has taught us is of no value with Jaffer Cawn, who suffers nothing to be sent to court without being read and approved by him: those officers dare as well eat fire, as send anything unknown to him.

Our Vacqueel, though an elderly man, and possibly not so brisk as some others, yet he has the character of the boldest Vacqueel in this Durbar; he once before did give the duhoy, and shall do it again, if your Honour, &c. please to give orders; but we crave leave to offer some reasons we have against doing it at this juncture.—*Cossimbuzar, 15th August* 1717.

We have wrote you already this day with our accounts, since which our broker (whom the Nabob's mutsuddy sent for last night) is returned from the Durbar, and acquaints us, that Dupnaran (whom we have lately obliged to be our friend) took him home to his house, and told him the phirmaund and perwannaes, which we formerly shewed the Nabob, were then sent up to the King. If you have got another copy of them, he said, bring them to me. I have talked

talked to the Nabob (who is violently angry with you), but give my service to your master, and tell him I have hopes to adjust your affairs, and will, if possibly it lies in my power: not that I am sure of it, for the Nabob is a vile man, but let me have a copy of your grants, and I'll try what is to be done.—*Cossimbuzar, Nov.* 21, 1717.

The Directors wrote to the Bengal Presidency on the importance of attending to the revenues, and deprecated any extension of the Company's possessions.

Letter to Bengal, 3d Feb. 1719.

Para. 63. We come now to take notice of that which we must always have a due regard to, *viz.* the articles of our revenue. We need not repeat the reasons; we have often mentioned them. The assurances you have given us, that you will, and still do, continue to enlarge our revenues all you possibly can without oppression, and faithfully promise your utmost endeavours, as well to augment them as diminish the expenses, excepting that of the military, which you would not lessen, are so many acceptable instances of your care and zeal for our service. We can desire no more, but to see these promising blossoms ripening into fruit. We would not have them enlarged by oppressing any, the poorest person; and allow the reason you give for continuing your military, that it is the best argument you can use for supporting our privileges and the trade, to be very substantial; the experience at Cossimbuzar, and for bringing down your goods, are pregnant instances of it, among many others.

64. "Notwithstanding the doubts we had, whether it would be our interest to have the thirty-eight towns, if granted, or whether they might not engage us in quarrels with the Moors, if hereafter they should be resolved to take them away, when they found them to flourish, of which

Letter to Bengal, 3d Feb. 1719.

which we wrote you to have your opinion; we find by para. 85, you say they would be of great advantage to us to have them. This we have discoursed Mr. Frankland upon, and of the necessary charge of soldiers to protect them from, or keep off, insults; and having well weighed the expected profit on one side, and the trouble that one time or other may be occasioned thereby on the other, we think it best for us to have only so many of them (when you can purchase them) as lie contiguous to our three towns above and below them, and those on the other side of the river, within about the same extent of ground as the towns when purchased reach on your side; and we are inclined only to have such of them as lie on or within about two miles of the bank of the river, because if there should ever be a necessity of defending them from the inroads of some neighbouring petty governor, our soldiers may not be harassed by long marches to defend our bounds. We suppose, too, that when Jaffer Cawn, or any other governor, finds you desire only part of what you might insist on, he or they may be the easier to give their consent, and not pick future quarrels; *for as our business is trade, it is not political for us to be encumbered with much territory.* Mr. Frankland assures us, the ground on the other side of you would be of great service to us for repairing our ships, because the river is not rapid there, and as we have said about the dock, that we should find benefit if we could have a good one. We might also add, that if ever we should be forced to the necessity of it, our settlement there would enable us to command the river; but this is not to be so much as publicly hinted at, lest it alarm the government.

The Court of Directors again, whilst they looked to the confirmation of the phirmaunds, expressed

expressed their indisposition to territorial acquisitions.

Para. 57. By the letters and consultations before us, it appears that King Mahmud Shaw is likely to sit easy on his throne, and not be troubled with competitors, or embarrassed by his officers, since the syads are cut off. That thereupon you cannot doubt that the subahship of Bengal will be soon settled, and Jaffer Cawn know whether he shall be continued or removed, and will bribe high to keep his post. That when you know who is subah, you will endeavour to get possession of the phirmaund grants, being unwilling to launch out monies at uncertainties, as in all likelihood it would be during the unsettled posture of affairs in the empire, wherein we think you judged rightly, that Hyder Cooly Caun, who is a great friend to the English, is, by report, one of the king's greatest favourites: he plainly shewed himself so while subah at Surat, for it was he who ordered us to be put into possession of the phirmaund privileges there. By all this we hope you will lay hold of the present opportunity to get the grants confirmed. First, that of the mint; then such of the towns as you shall judge proper, in pursuance of what we have wrote you, and according to the paragraphs which you promise to have regard unto. *Remember, we are not fond of much territory*, especially if it lies at a distance from you, or is not pretty near the water-side, nor indeed of any, unless you have a moral assurance it will contribute, directly or in consequence, to our real benefit.

General Letter to Bengal, 16 Feb. 1721.

The Company's representatives abroad had, at this early period, directed their attention to the formation of roads, &c.

Para. 76. The reasons given for making the new roads on the S.S.W. and E. to W. sides of your towns, and the benefit

General Letter to Bengal, 16 Feb. 1721.

General Letter to Bengal, 16 Feb. 1721.

benefit expected and arising thereby, as well to see through your bounds into the country of the neighbouring Zemindars, who attacked you some time before, as to facilitate the march of your soldiers when necessary to support your utmost outguards, and prevent private robberies in the night from rogues abroad, and that thereby the wind hath a free passage into the town, and likely to contribute to its healthiness, carry their own commendations with them; and we must add, we look on it as a piece of good management in you to lay hold of a fitting opportunity, to persuade your inhabitants to agree to your making them, and they bear the charge.

The desire of the Directors was conveyed to the Council in Bengal, that the young servants should be urged and encouraged to acquire a knowledge of the native languages.

General Letter to Bengal, 16 Feb. 1721.

Para. 82. We observe your want of writers. We sent you a sufficient supply the last season. Encourage them all to learn the country languages, which are sooner attained by youth than men grown, because the memory is then more fitted to keep what they learn, and their tongues more ready and pliable to give the true accent in pronunciation. Besides, some men are so proud, they think it is like sending them again to school when they are put upon learning a language. Enquire at some set times what proficiency the youths make therein, and awaken their ambition by representing to them, they will be the better qualified for a chiefship in time, or to be employed at the aurungs.

General Letter to Bengal, 14 Feb. 1722.

Para. 55. The accounts you give us of being pretty easy with the country government, notwithstanding the unsettled condition of the country, is acceptable, and much more your proceedings in clearing Contoo, the Cossimbuzar broker,

broker, when seized by the Nabob, and your boats when stopped at the several choukies. These are so many new proofs of the necessity of putting on a face of power and resolution, as we have often mentioned, to recover our privileges when openly infringed, and softer methods and applications for redress prove ineffectual, and that even the country government are afraid when you give them the duhoy in a prudent manner, and on well-grounded occasion. Yearly experience shews you they are always watching for opportunities to get money out of you, as in the dispute of your making the road for the benefit of your towns. Let it be your constant care (as hitherto by what appears it has been), to give them no just handles if possible. We need not add (because it hath been often recommended to you), that you continue to keep fair with the Hughly government, which, with a little prudence, may be done at a cheap rate, even your usual piscoshes. Be equally careful to keep up a good understanding with the Nabob, so as good words and a respectful behaviour, without paying too dear for it, will contribute. Is there no likelihood of contracting a friendship with one or more of his favourites, to make your way to, and the obtaining your requests from, him more easy? Such things have been practised formerly, and particularly by President Eyres, who, by his intimacy with Mirza Mudusfer, first obtained the grant of your towns.

General Letter to Bengal, 14 Feb. 1722.

The effects resulting from the access of licensed and unlicensed parties into the interior, were noticed from home.

Para. 63. We understand some of the persons we have permitted to reside free merchants in India, have suggested that, by virtue of the license contained in their covenants under our common seal, they have an equal liberty with ourselves to trade where and how they please: and think themselves

General Letter to Bengal, 14 Feb. 1722.

General Letter to Bengal, 14 Feb. 1722.

themselves no way accountable for mal-administration, or to be questioned by our Presidents and Councils (who are our representatives) when chargeable therewith. Give public notice to all with you, that if they persist in that opinion, they will find themselves mistaken, and that by a clause in their covenants they are obliged to return for England whenever we shall see just cause. That you have our authority to send them accordingly, whenever you find them acting contrary to our general interest, or that of the English trade in India. As to such as are not under covenants, and therefore presume they are no way accountable for their behaviour towards us or the interest aforesaid; do you take care to let them know, that by the laws, no subject of his Majesty can stay in India without our leave, and therefore, as they are there only during good behaviour, so you will let them continue no longer than they deserve it.

64. Though we have laid down these rules on such general terms, yet we add, that we will not have the President and Council put them in practice so far as to send any to England, unless where the accusation is full, and as well proved as the case can admit of, and the fault of a notorious nature; *such as assisting our enemies, or openly striking at our privileges, or refusing to comply with the rules by us prescribed for the good government of our settlements, where such person or persons shall be; and this not by inferences only, or strained constructions or interpretations.*

To check extravagance, and to enforce obedience to orders, the Directors wrote,

Letter to Bengal, 7 Jan. 1725.

Para. 19. We find an entry in your consultation of a chaise and pair of horses bought for the President, Mr. Deane, charged to us as costing Rupees eleven hundred. We gave no order or leave for it, and thereby, we hereby direct

direct that the money be repaid into our cash out of his effects, and that nothing of this nature be again introduced: if our servants will have such superfluities, let them pay for them.

The state of the Mogul affairs led the Court to caution the Council to be fully alive to the passing events in which the Company's interests might become involved.

Letter to Bengal, 1 Dec. 1725.

The battle you mentioned to be fought by the Vizier, wherein he was successful against the King's army, and killed the general Mombarras Cawn, his sons, and several Omrahs, does in our opinion show that affairs in the Mogul's dominions are in the utmost confusion, and tend towards some extraordinary crisis. Our advices from Fort St. George say, that the said Vizier, Chicklis Cawn, was in the Metchlepatam country, and from thence intended to march to Bengal to enlarge his power. Time only must discover the event of these troubles: in the interim keep a watchful eye to preserve yourselves from danger, and keep up your friendship with the Hughly government, which may be the more necessary in this critical juncture.

The Directors announced to the government that they had obtained his Majesty's Royal Charter for a Mayor's Court at Calcutta.

Letter to Bengal, 17 Feb. 1726.

To enable us by virtue thereof to have our affairs in all those places, and within the districts therein-mentioned, as also in all the subordinate factories in those presidencies, managed with greater authority than ever hitherto, we applied to get the management of the civil affairs, as near as we could, agreeable to the practice and methods of the Mayor's Court at Fort St. George, which have continued for many years, as you will see in the said charter, of

Letter to Bengal, 17 Feb. 1726.

of which we send you, by the 'Bridgwater,' an exemplification under the great seal of this kingdom.

Various books of instruction for the proceedings of the new court, were transmitted with the despatch.

13. If you apply heartily, as we earnestly recommend to you to endeavour, you will bring the Mayor's Court, though new with you at present, into use and good liking of all the people, for doubtless there doth arise among you at times some disputes in the matters of *meum* and *tuum*, and if you do exercise the other powers with prudence and justice: and we must tell you it is greatly incumbent on you so to do, for the very intimations of kings are commands, and if not obeyed, or their grants not thankfully accepted and made use of as they ought, may bring you as well as us into a premunire.

15. Be you particularly careful on your part, and let the mayor and aldermen know that we also earnestly recommend to them, to check the first beginnings of any oppressions, exactions, misbehaviour towards any, or the least foul practice of the attornies and other officers of the court; keep them all within due bounds of decorum, and discountenance all attempts of prolonging of suits. In the instructions are certain distances of times between one part of the processes and what next is to follow; let the court curtail them as much as equitable may be, for justice may be rendered sour by delaying: the most expeditious it can be made in reason is thereby the better.

Jaffier Khan the Nabob of Bengal, died in 1725, and was succeeded by Sujah Khan, his son-in-law, who removed to Moorshedábad, accompanied by two omrahs, one of whom was Ally Verdy Khan.

The

The Court adverted to the event in the following terms:—

Letter to Bengal, 21 Feb. 1728.

We find you seem to lament the death of your old Nabob Jaffer Cawn, and wish that he may be succeeded by his son-in-law Sujah Cawn, who you say had on many occasions showed the English his friendship and favour. Wherefore, we are very glad to find by your's of the 28th of January, that he had been appointed and confirmed in that high station, hoping that he will continue us his friendship and favour: so that we flatter ourselves that our affairs, under your care, will not be any ways prejudiced by this change in your government.

In 1729, Ally Verdy Khan was appointed governor of Bahar, and ultimately, through intrigue and treachery, proclaimed Nabob of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa.

The following orders to Bengal, explain the origin of the appointment of a Council of *nine* Members, which continued until Parliament entered upon an inquiry into the affairs of the Company.

Letter to Bengal, 3 Dec. 1731.

Para. 11. The badness of the goods sent us for two years past, having not only raised a general clamour among the buyers, but also great uneasiness in the Proprietors of the Company's stock, and we being convinced that there has been a culpable neglect in the management of our affairs by the unequal sortment of the goods, deficiencies in their lengths and breadths, and excessive high prices, together with the vast quantities of fine unvendable articles sent us, contrary to our orders, and having kept back great quantities of goods we wanted and ordered, and have been employed for their private trade; by the first we are great sufferers, and by the last we are deprived of great

Letter to Bengal, 3 Dec. 1731.

great profits that we might naturally have expected, those goods being greatly in demand; for these reasons, and to strike terror to those that succeed, we have thought fit to dismiss from our service six members. This extraordinary step we have been obliged to take, in order to remedy these and any such like evils, and to clear our reputations from the censure the world would otherwise throw upon us, that we connived at the bad actions of our servants, hereby convincing mankind that we are not biassed with favour or affection to any particular person whatsoever.

12. By these ships we have sent a commission under our seal, constituting and appointing John Stackhouse, Esq. to be President, with eight other members, for the management of all our affairs at Calcutta, and the factories subordinate thereto, hereby directing the military, and all under our protection, to pay all due respect to such orders as you shall think fit to make for our advantage, or the benefit of the place.

13. We persuade ourselves that you, the now President and Council, having such an example of our just resentment set before you, will, in your several stations, discharge the great trust reposed in you, by studying to advance the Company's interest by all possible means; and as we are informed that great mischiefs happen to our interest, as well as to your own destruction, by the private trade of India, as it is at present, and has for some years past been carried on, to a much greater degree than it should have been, we reserve ourselves to give our opinion upon that head by the latter ships.

The Court then urge upon the Council the importance of setting an example of economy.

17. Among the rest of complaints from your place, is none of the least, the extravagant way of living, of which

which we shall enlarge more in our next letters; at present we only recommend it very seriously to our new president, that he shews a good example of frugality, by keeping a decent retinue, such as formerly was practised, for the dignity of his station; and not fall into that foppery of having a set of musick at his table, and a coach and six, with guards and running footmen, as we are informed is now practised, not only by the president, but some of inferior rank, and that he recommends the same to all those that shall be in lower stations, in order to check this luxury.

Letter to Bengal, 3 Dec. 1731.

The pirate forces on the Malabar coast had seriously affected the interests of the Company—the successful efforts made by their servants to suppress Angria's power were urged as a ground for seeking favour at the hands of the Nabob, and economy was again pressed upon their attention.

Par. 40. You are, no doubt, well apprized of the great charge we are, and have been at for a series of years, in order to depress and keep under the power of Angria's family upon the Malabar coast, more especially of late, to prevent their seizing upon the Sciddee's territories, which if accomplished, would make them formidable to the highest degree to the whole trade of India, both Moors and Europeans: this has been attended with such desirable success, that their fleets have been either blocked up in harbour, or hindered from committing any considerable depredations, and our servants at Fort St. George inform us, that the courtiers about the Mogul have a very grateful sense of these our services to the common good, and therefore, as you have frequent squabbles with the Nabob at Muxadavad, and other great men about you, we are apt to think that, if proper measures were taken by your vacqueel at court, an order might be

Letter to Bengal, 31 Jan. 1734.

Letter to Bengal, 31 Jan. 1734.

obtained commanding the Nabob to use us better, and in a more friendly manner upon that account.

41. We are highly pleased that the extravagant way of living which had obtained such deep rooting among you, is entirely laid aside. Whenever such a practice prevails in any of our servants, we shall always suspect that we are the paymasters in some shape or other, and it seldom fails of bringing them to penury and want; we must, therefore, both for your sakes and our own, earnestly recommend frugality as a cardinal virtue, and by a due regard to the said advice, we do not doubt but the diet and other allowances from us will be amply sufficient to defray all necessary expenses, as Bengal is not only the cheapest part of India to live in, but perhaps the most plentiful country in the whole world.

The Court desired to secure the people from oppression, and they pointed out the necessity of the Council watching the growing influence of the French.

Letter to Bengal, 23 Jan. 1735.

55. Whenever encroachments are made by farmers or renters, and the poor inhabitants are oppressed by them, contrary to the tenor of their cowles, all such unwarrantable proceedings must be nipt in the bud. It plainly appears from the fifty-ninth paragraph, that they watch all opportunities to extend their power beyond legal bounds, and therefore you must have a constant eye over them, and whenever any just complaints are made against them by the parties aggrieved, be sure to see justice done them, and by taking vigorous measures immediately, thereupon prevent any such foul practices being repeated.

Letter to Bengal, 12 Dec. 1735.

Now the French are settled at Patna, our chief and council must double their diligence, and keep all the Assamys they can true to our interest, and advance such of them

them as comply with their contracts sufficient sums of money to carry on their business, being cautious to make as few bad debts as possible. We should esteem it an agreeable piece of service, if a year's stock of petre beforehand lay always at Calcutta, and as such recommend it to you, to use your utmost endeavours to accomplish it, provided it can be done without advancing the price, which when obtained will answer very valuable purposes. Letter to Bengal, 12 Dec. 1735.

In order to enforce a system of economy in all branches of their establishment, the Directors prescribed the form of an oath to be taken by their servants, binding them to abstain from all pecuniary dealings with the natives whilst they held an official station.

Para. 17. For want of due regard to our orders, we have suffered many evils and much damage, most part of our servants, as we have reason to believe, being fallen into a dependence upon the black merchants and shroffs with whom our business is transacted, and therefore we order, that in the room of the present oath of fidelity, the following oath shall be taken by all who continue in, or shall be admitted as chief and of council at Calcutta, or any of the subordinate factories, and that none but such as do take the said oath shall be deemed, either then or in future, qualified to act in such stations in our service. Letter to Bengal, 8 Feb. 1737.

I —— ——— do swear, that I will be true and faithful to the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East-Indies, and will duly and faithfully execute and discharge the trust reposed in me to the utmost of my skill and power, and that I am not now indebted to, nor will run in debt to or borrow of, directly or indirectly, all or any of the merchants, shroffs, or other persons with whom the said Company now hath made or may make any

Letter to Bengal, 8 Feb. 1737.

contract, nor of any other merchants, shroffs, or other persons, by their being security for me, either jointly or separately, above the sum of four thousand rupees in the whole, during my being in this council;—So help me GOD.

18. And in case at any time any one is found to be guilty of the breach of this oath, you are hereby directed to expel him immediately from our service.

The inhabitants having suffered from the effects of a severe storm, the government came forward to their relief, and a scarcity having arisen in Bengal in the following year, the Directors approved and sanctioned the measures adopted by the government for alleviating the distress on both occasions.

Letter to Bengal, 13 Dec. 1738.

We approve of your relieving the inhabitants, on their suffering by the storm the loss of their dwellings and great part of their substance, and in forbearing to collect the revenues of the poor people in the town for some time.

Letter to Bengal, 21 March 1739.

Para. 61. You did well in prohibiting the exportation of rice on the scarcity; the welfare of the place, on all such melancholy occasions, must be first and principally regarded.

62. We cannot but acquiesce, on so general a calamity, in your taking off the duty on all rice brought into the town; and approve of buying a parcel with our money, to deliver out in small parcels at the bazar rate.

At this period Nizam-ul-Mulk, the soubahdar of the Deccan, became jealous of the Nabob Ally Verdy's increasing power in Bengal, and instigated the Mahrattas to demand the *chout*,* or tribute, granted

* *Vide* page 8.

granted them by the Mogul. They accordingly advanced in the two divisions of Poonah and Berar to Burdwan, under the command of Bajee Row and Ragojee Boonslah. The scourge occasioned by the irruption was dreadful. Commerce was at a stand throughout the provinces; the poor affrighted natives fled in terror from their looms and their fields to the woods, where they either perished from hunger, or fell an easy prey to the wild beasts with which the forests abounded. The inhabitants of Calcutta, dreading a repetition of the calamities, obtained permission to dig a ditch round the city, to the extent of seven miles (the Company's bounds), which was called the *Mahratta Ditch*. BENGAL.

Ally Verdy succeeded, the following year, in obliging the Mahrattas to make a precipitate retreat: upon which occasion he was confirmed by the Mogul soubahdar of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, on condition of his remitting annually to Delhi a certain tribute.

The measures taken by the Council to guard against the effects of a repetition of the Mahratta invasion were sanctioned by the Directors.

Letter to Bengal, 21 March 1743.

We entirely approve of the necessary precautions taken on the Morattas' invasion to prevent a surprise, by hiring a number of Lascars, forming the inhabitants into a militia, surveying the town, fortifications, guns, purchasing some small arms and the like; the expense upon such an urgent occasion we cheerfully acquiesce in, relying upon your care and frugality in disbursing our money on every article.

Para. 45.

Letter to Bengal, 7 May 1746.

Para. 45. As the province is liable to the Morattas' incursions, we would have such additions made to our fortifications as you upon the spot shall deem requisite for the security of the settlements, putting us to no further expense herein than is necessary.

Among the various matters that arose in the course of the Company's government was a question as to what oaths should be administered to Heathens, or Indians, within their respective jurisdictions. The Directors wrote to the government in Bengal:

Letter to Bengal, 9 March 1747.

Para. 25. Having from time to time consulted the most eminent counsel upon the subject, we send you extracts from the opinions which have been already taken, and hope they will be sufficient for your government.

26. Mr. Browne, the Company's standing counsel, in an opinion of his, says:—

"If the witness voluntarily takes the oath of his country from the hands of a Bramin, or in the pagodas, in order to give a sanction to his testimony, before he comes to attest a fact, all that you can do is to afford a greater or less share of credit to his evidence, according to the solemnity and the nature of the oath taken, and the degree of reverence in which it is held by the Indians; and from this measure, and the probabilty of fact testified, the Court must form a judgment upon the whole case according to their real belief of the witness."

Sir Dudley Rider, attorney-general, Sir John Strange, late solicitor-general, and Mr. Browne, in a joint opinion, say:—

"We think it safest for the Court to admit the evidence of Heathen witnesses in such cases as have been usual since the

the charter, and upon such oaths as are commonly taken by them in case of evidence, according to their respective religions; but to be particularly careful not to oblige them to take such oaths as their customs render it infamous for them to take."

Letter to Bengal, 9 March 1747.

The same gentlemen, in answer to another question, say:—

"We are of opinion the Court cannot compel the taking of the Pagoda oath, and if the Court, upon the party's refusal to take, or should, without entering into the merits of the cause, make a decree against the party, we apprehend it would be error, and a foundation for an appeal; and if the Mayor's Court should endeavour by censure to compel the party to take it, it will be a just ground of complaint against the Court as a misbehaviour in their office."

And the present Attorney and Solicitor-general, Mr. Browne and Mr. Browning, in a joint opinion, say:—

"If the Mayor's Court should insist on an Indian's putting in his answer, or being sworn as a witness in a manner inconsistent with the religion of his caste, it will be proper to bring that matter before the Governor and Council by appeal."

27. We expect these opinions will have that weight with the Mayor's Court to induce them to accept the answers and evidence of the Gentoos, and other natives of India, upon such oaths as are commonly taken by them, and not to insist upon such as their customs render it infamous for them to take.

MADRAS.

The Directors, in their instructions to their presidency of MADRAS, cautioned the Council to avoid being involved in the troubles that had arisen amongst the native powers on the Coast. They

MADRAS. They unwillingly consented to incur the heavy charges which the repair of the fortifications had rendered necessary, they pressed the observance of all possible economy, and desired that every encouragement should be given to the native population to settle around the Company's property by just and humane government.

Letter to Fort St. George, 1 Dec 1725.

The troubles in the country round about you give but a dull prospect. Let it be your care to keep them as far off yourselves as you can; to give no occasion, as far as possibly to be avoided, for quarrelling with you, and to be constantly on your guard.

50. The making no further present to the Nabob, and ordering our people at Vizagapatam not to give any thing when a large present is demanded, are both satisfactory. Every sum parted with is only a temptation to them to expect and demand a greater, and ought never to be done unless on an absolute necessity to prevent a worse mischief.

52. For the reasons by you given, we permit you to rebuild your silver Mint, taking care it be done substantially, and made as useful as you can, but without the charge of ornaments; let frugality be used in the whole. The Powder-house we also consent to be rebuilt, made useful and substantial. The East Curtain at Fort St. David's, and the covering of the Garden-house and the Cudalore Factory, we shall allow of, depending on Mr. Pitt's inspection, that both be done with frugality and substantially performed. It is a prodigious sum our buildings there and at Fort St. George have cost us, so that every motion for laying out more sounds harsh.

58. When we say such or such an article of expense shall not exceed the sum limited by us, we do not thereby mean that we are content it should be so much, as by the letters before

before us you seem to apprehend when you refer to the months you compared, but our general aim thereby is, that on no pretence it be higher, though as much lower as possible. Letter to Fort St. George, 1 Dec. 1725.

59. But what is of the last importance to us is, that the bounds be filled with useful inhabitants, and the only way to get and keep them is by a steady and constant, just and humane government, doing right to every one, and not suffering the voice of oppression to be heard, or so much as whispered in the streets. We hope Mr. Pitt has been careful, and will continue and persevere therein, which will be for his honour and our advantage. The increase of the inhabitants and of the revenues, and the lessening of the annual expense, will be to us the most convincing arguments of his good management, especially if thereto be added (as we expect) the due care of the investments.

The Directors, in transmitting the charter for the Mayor's Court, describe its constitution, and recommended to that court—

To have always as many of their members there in all judgments to be given by them as possible, not only for the greater solemnity, but also for the more thorough sifting all matters that shall come before them; to prevent, as far as possible, the least mistake or error in the sentence given, as remembering they do therein act in the place of God towards the people; and, according to the Scripture expression, "he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." Letter to Fort St. George, 17 Feb. 1726.

The financial difficulties of the Company are adverted to as the reason why they could not consent to lower the duties on the trade, and the Council were desired to take measures for inducing the native weavers to settle at Madras. Letter to Fort St. George, 6 Feb. 1732.

The

The Court also expressed their satisfaction at the measures taken by the President and Council to give relief during the famine on the coast.

Letter to Fort St. George, 25 Oct. 1738.

We entirely approve of your laying in a stock of rice, by making a large purchase with twenty-one thousand pagodas of our money, and are highly pleased that it was such an eminent relief to the inhabitants, as is set forth in both your letters. You may be assured that our being no gainers thereby, in such a calamitous time, is by no means displeasing to us. A watchful eye was necessary that those who delivered it out did not charge more than the prime cost. We hope a due care was taken in this important respect, although we don't find, after the first purchase was made in September, the rate fixed by any order of consultation, which we must say had been the regular method to prevent any of our servants, or black people in the warehouse, being *knaves in grain*, as it is wittily expressed in your letter.

The Court desired full information regarding their European rivals, the French.

Letter to Fort St. George, 30 Dec. 1737.

The most particular intelligence procurable concerning those powerful competitors, the French, and their commerce, must annually be communicated to us, inserting the number of ships, tonnage, imports and exports, with the situation of their affairs, and our other rivals in trade upon the coast of Coromandel.

The incursions of the Mahrattas having been severely felt, the Court observed that,

Letter to Fort St. George, 20 Jan. 1741.

The Mahrattas invading, overrunning, and plundering the Coromandel coast, give us a most sensible and deep concern, more especially as they came within our bounds, and sent you a most insulting message, tacked to an enormous

enormous and unheard-of demand, which you did well to answer from the mouths of our cannon, and thereupon to put yourselves in the most defensible posture; we hope that long before now the coast is well rid of them, and that the country powers have been roused to defend their subjects' property against all such formidable enemies in future; however that may be, you must by no means become tributary to, or suffer contributions to be levied upon us, either by the Moors or Mahrattas. Letter to Fort St. George, 20 Jan. 1741.

The same principles guided the Directors in their instructions to the presidency of BOMBAY. Peace with the Mahrattas—preparations for *defensive* and not *offensive* measures—economy in the repair of fortifications, and limitation in the marine establishment. BOMBAY.

Para. 80. We shall now subjoin our sentiments on the conduct and management of our affairs at Bombay; after hearing all persons who could give us any information of that presidency, or the state of affairs under it. Letter to Bombay, 16 Feb. 1741.

82. You will see how much we approve of your measures in making peace with the Mahrattas, at the same time we perceive if it had not been for our express orders, you would not have judged so well for our interests, by being overcome with your false fears.

83. This may intimate to you how acceptable it would have been to us, had you pursued the same measures with respect to all other Indian powers.

85. We must also remark here our dissatisfaction at your employing none of our Council in the important transactions with the Mahrattas and others, for notwithstanding any pretended superior capacities in those you did employ, we do not reckon military men proper judges of these affairs. But rather that they have a strong bias in their minds

1741. minds by warlike notions which incline them to measures as are quite contrary to the true interest of a Trading Society, and not only so, but also to propagate and impress others with notions adapted to promote such ends: from whence is it else possible, that such principles should spring as you are possessed of, particularly that all our credit is gone, because we don't make that figure upon the coast as may make all people afraid of us, if they meddle with any, though they do not belong to us.

86. So far indeed we will grant that it is prudent to suspect them, and to be upon your guard, but there is a great deal of difference in point of charges, betwixt a defensive and offensive state of war, which latter must always be the case while we live in open war; besides the continuing in such a state, compels our enemies to increase their forces, and makes them by degrees to become formidable. And what is the end of all? why, we have a great deal to lose, and they have nothing of any value that you can take from them.

87. We are sensible how much you have been out in your calculate of the charge you are putting us to. This matter should have been entered upon with more caution and judgment, for although we are very willing to be at the charge of fortifying all our settlements in order to secure both ours and the inhabitants' property living under our protection, yet this should be undertaken in a reasonable and practicable manner. Whether your works are such we are told there is some reason to doubt.

88. In the third resolution you will see that we are utterly averse to the keeping up such a marine force as you require. We are unanimously of opinion, the force we now allow you is sufficient for your safety and our purpose, which in short is our own defence, and no farther.

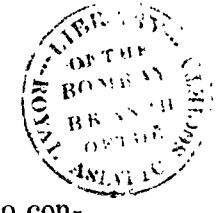
The

The present chapter may be viewed as intro- 1741.
ductory to this work. It presents little to interest the general reader, but when connected with the extraordinary fact, that these limited settlements with a few hundred men are now the principal presidencies of an empire containing one hundred million of native subjects, yielding a tribute of more than three millions annually to Great Britian, possessing an army of 200,000* rank and file, and that in its acquisition history records the brilliant achievements of our most illustrious soldiers and distinguished statesmen, there is scarcely an Englishman who must not feel desirous of some information, as to the progressive steps by which such vast possessions have been obtained. A knowledge of the facts may also dissipate some of the unfavorable impressions which have been more or less imbibed, regarding the East-India Company, whose character has been gathered from Parliamentary documents prepared for a given purpose, rather than from a fair and candid statement of events as they arose.

A brief reference has been made to the early history of Hindostan, and to those states which arose on the dismemberment of the Mogul power. The settlement of the first Europeans on the continent of India; the incorporation of the East-India Company in 1600; the establishment

* In 1826, the army consisted of 276,000.

1741. blishment of a rival corporation; the petition of the original Company to Parliament against the measure, and the ultimate union of both companies have been adverted to. Extracts have been given from the orders and instructions of the Court of Directors to their servants at this early period of the United Company, in the exact terms in which they were conveyed to India. Although quaintly expressed, they evince sound sense, and a shrewd knowledge of human nature. They repudiate the idea of the Company desiring to acquire territorial possessions: they also manifest a laudable anxiety to foster and protect the natives; to infuse a spirit of economy in the public expenditure; and that justice should be impartially and duly administered.



CHAPTER II.

THE EAST-INDIA COMPANY were now to contend with their most powerful European rival for political supremacy in India. 1746-1755.

Having advanced one million at three per cent. for the use of the public in 1744, the exclusive trade was continued to them until 1780. With the exception of their commercial concerns, and the treaty concluded by their representatives at Bombay with the Mahrattas in July 1739,* in order to preserve their respective rights in issuing passes, &c., few matters of moment occurred until the year 1746, when the effects of the union between France and Spain, which occasioned hostilities in Europe, and involved Great Britain, were soon felt in India. England had suffered so severely both by sea and land, that great dissensions were caused throughout the country; but no sooner did the French attempt to aid the Pretender, who

* This treaty consisted of fourteen articles, and was executed in July 1739, between Mr. Law, governor of Bombay, on behalf of the Company, and Bajee Rao, the first minister of the most serene Sou Rajah.—*Vide* Treaties and Engagements with the Native Princes, &c. printed in 1812, p. 477.

who had landed on the western coast of Scotland in July 1745, (encouraged as they had been by the supporters of the civil war,) than all differences were forgotten in the united energies of the people to support the crown, and oppose the influence of the French councils.

Hostilities in India commenced between the French and English forces on the coast of Coromandel. The former fitted out an expedition at Pondicherry, besieged, and took Madras; an event that entailed a loss of £180,000 on the Company.

Madras captured.

The enemy had so superior a fleet that the Company petitioned the crown to strengthen the British naval force in India. In announcing the result, the Directors wrote:

Letter to Bengal, 16 Oct. 1747.

Para. 3. Upon our strenuous application His Majesty hath been graciously pleased to send a strong squadron of men of war, under the command of the honourable Rear-Admiral Boscawen, with these our ships whereon this letter is sent.

7. In case Rear Admiral Boscawen, or the commander in chief of His Majesty's forces, should require your assistance in attacking the enemy any where near you, we hereby order you to give it him to the utmost of your power, and to put under his command what military, marine, or other force you can possibly procure or spare consistent with the safety of your place.

The Court animadverted upon the apparent want of firmness on the part of the Bengal government in not supporting the Company's interests against those of the French, whose success at Madras had

had filled the Council at Calcutta with fear for their own safety. 1748.

Letter to the Governor of Fort William, June 17, 1748.

Para. 2. It is plain from the apprehension you was under on the loss of Madras, lest the French should destroy you next, that you neither thought your own strength, though supported at that time by six of His Majesty's ships, nor the neutrality of the country a sufficient security, and you at all times stand so much in awe of the country government that they easily and shamefully raise immense contributions upon you at the Company's expense, though almost always under pretence of abuses in carrying on private trade.

6. If you do not prevail upon the Nabob to acquiesce in your setting about the works and fortifications without molestation, you are to let him know in a proper manner. You have our orders to make Calcutta as secure as you can against the French, or any other European enemy; and that if he obstructs you in following those orders you are forbid to issue any money for trade, and must do the best you can to fulfil them. Tell him that you shall be sorry to be obliged to take such measures as may be ruinous to his revenues and the trade of the country in general; and you may add, the King of England having the protection of the Company greatly at heart, as they may perceive by the strong force he hath sent to the East-Indies to meet the French, His Majesty will support the Company in whatever they think fit to do for their future security; for though a peace is now making with France, no one knows how long it may last, and when war is broke out it is always too late to make fortifications strong enough to make defence against an enterprising enemy; as appears from what happened at Madras, where strong works were erecting, but could not be half finished before the French attacked and took the place.

1748. MADRAS. Madras was restored to the Company by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle; and the Directors appointed an engineer-general for the purpose of superintending, and where necessary, in constructing fortifications both at Madras and Calcutta.

The French, under Dupleix, took part in the contentions of two rival native chiefs, who respectively claimed the nabobship of the Carnatic. The point in dispute was, whether Mahomed Ali should be acknowledged Nabob. His pretensions were supported by the English, and opposed by the French. In order to terminate the hostilities in which we had been engaged during a series of years, a negotiation between M. Dupleix and Mr. Saunders took place at Fort St. George, in 1754. January 1754. The negotiation was broken off, and matters were taken up by the governments of the two nations in Europe—Lord Holderness negotiating for the English, and M. Daveleur on the part of the French: the Duke of Newcastle and the French ambassador, the Duc de Mirepoix, sharing in the conference and decisions when necessary. The little knowledge possessed by the parties in Europe, as to Indian affairs, rendering it utterly impossible for them to adopt any definitive arrangement, M. Godeheu was sent out to supersede M. Dupleix in the government of all the French possessions in India, and arrived at Pondicherry in August 1754. On the 11th October, a suspension of arms was agreed upon;

upon; and, on the 23d December, a provisional treaty, subject to confirmation in Europe, was signed at Pondicherry. By that treaty, Mahomed Ali was left Nabob of the Carnatic. 1754. MADRAS.

During the above-mentioned operations Captain (afterwards Lord) Clive first displayed those extraordinary talents, which were so successfully exerted in laying the foundation of our Indian empire. It is a singular coincidence, that the soldier who achieved such conquests, and the historian who recorded those achievements, were both appointed Writers by the Court of Directors on the same day, *viz.* the 15th December 1742; Clive for Madras, and Orme for Bengal. Clive reached Madras in 1743. He appears to have had a strong predilection for a military life, for which he soon abandoned the civil service. He held the rank of ensign under Major Lawrence in 1747. The Court of Directors, in their letter to Madras of the 4th December 1747, alluding to the capture of that settlement, wrote: "Be sure to encourage Ensign Clive in his martial pursuits, according to his merit: any improvement he shall make therein shall be duly regarded by us." Again, on the 24th January 1753, adverting to the favourable change in their affairs on the coast, and to the services of Major Lawrence, they observed: "And here it is but justice to express the great regard we have for the merit of Captain Clive, to whose courage and conduct the late favourable Clive appointed a Writer.

1754. MADRAS. turn in affairs has been greatly owing, and he may be assured of our having a just sense of his services." After a series of gallant exploits, among which the siege of Arcot stood most prominent, he returned to England, on account of his health, in October 1753. He received the thanks of the Court of Directors, with other marks of their approbation.

At this period, the Directors pressed most strongly upon the attention of his Majesty's ministers, the great increase that had taken place in the French power in India. They pointed out the intelligence contained in their last advices from India, by which it appeared the French Commissioners were pursuing measures that would inevitably bring the whole of the Company's trade and their settlements on the coast of Coromandel under French influence. The Company represented that they had exerted themselves in sending out men and military stores, and that they intended to send a further force and to exert themselves as far as a trading company could, but they felt it to be a duty which they owed to the public and themselves, to lay the facts before ministers, in order that the same might be made known to the King.

In March 1755, the Court having appointed Colonel Clive a member of the Madras council, he embarked with his family for India on board the Streatham. He first reached Bombay, arriving at

at the period when the pirate forces of Angria,* which had overpowered many merchant vessels, received a severe check by a fleet under Commodore James, the commander of the Company's ships of war in India. The Council at that presidency were encouraged to follow up the success of the commodore by attempting a decisive blow against Gheria, the principal station of the pirates. A considerable fleet belonging to his Majesty, accompanied by Commodore James with the Company's ships, the troops on board being commanded by Colonel Clive, accordingly stood into the river in February 1756, and burnt the whole of the enemy's fleet, compelling the garrison to surrender. 1756. BOMBAY. Pirates subdued. 1756-7.

By the treaty of the 12th October, which immediately followed these transactions, † Bancote and various villages were ceded by the Mahrattas to the Company in exchange for Gheria; it being agreed that the Dutch should never be permitted to settle in the Mahratta dominions. Various arrangements were also entered into with sundry Rajahs on the Malabar coast, conferring certain privileges of trade; and in 1759 a phirmaund was obtained from the Mogul, granting the government of Surat to the Company.

In Bengal Seraje-ud-Dowlah had succeeded his grandfather, Ally Verdy. He was of a cruel, vindictive, and sullen disposition, of profligate habits BENGAL. Cruelties of the Nabob.

* *Vide* page 33. † *Vide* printed Treaties.

1756. BENGAL.

habits, and entertained strong feelings of dislike to the English. It was during his government that the massacre in the Black Hole at Calcutta took place; one hundred and forty-six persons, including Mr. Holwell, the governor of Fort William, being incarcerated, in an intensely sultry night in the month of June, in a dungeon not twenty feet square—of whom not more than twenty-three came out alive the ensuing morning. Mr. Holwell was himself amongst the survivors; notwithstanding the shock which his constitution received, he returned to England, and lived by the age of ninety.

Clive sent with an expedition to Calcutta.

The Nabob, after that event, having evacuated Calcutta, a deputation was despatched to Madras, to solicit immediate and effectual succour: it reached Fort St. George *on the 5th August.** A detachment of nine hundred Europeans, with fifteen hundred sepoys, under the command of Colonel Clive, was immediately despatched to Bengal, accompanied by Admiral Watson, with a squadron then fortunately in the roads, consisting of the Kent, sixty-four (the Admiral's); the Cumberland,

* Among the troops selected in the first instance, was the regiment commanded by Colonel Aldercorn, a king's officer, who declined serving under Clive or even to admit of his troops embarking for Calcutta, although before leaving England in 1754, he applied to the Court of Directors for additional pay, when they resolved that his troops should be paid the same as the Company's troops, the Company paying the difference.—*Court Papers, 27th July* 1754.

Cumberland, seventy, on which Admiral Pocock hoisted his flag; the Tiger, sixty; Salisbury, fifty; Bridgewater, twenty; and a fire-ship; together with transports for the troops. On the 27th December, all the ships and vessels had arrived at Fulta, and the next afternoon anchored ten miles below the fort at Budge-Budge, which Admiral Watson determined to attack the following morning. An ambuscade was planned to intercept the retreat of the garrison. It was directed by Colonel Clive in person, and proved the prelude to more serious operations. The Mogul general having marched from Calcutta to aid the garrison at Budge-Budge, with fifteen hundred horse and two thousand foot, an engagement took place. Monick Chund, the native commander, was obliged to retreat with his troops to Hooghly, and from thence to the Nabob of Moorshedabad. On the 2d January 1757, at nine in the morning, the Kent and Tiger anchored before the gates of Fort William, the batteries of which were silenced by eleven, the fort was shortly evacuated, and a detachment under Captain Coote took possession, with loud acclamations; the British colours being once more hoisted on the ramparts. Mr. Drake and the former members of council were, the following day, solemnly reinstated by Admiral Watson.*

1756. BENGAL.

1757.

Calcutta retaken.

Council restored.

The

* At a General Court, the 21st December 1757.—"Resolved, That the thanks of this General Court be given to Vice-Admiral Watson,

1757. BENGAL.

The orders given to the Admiral and Colonel Clive when they left Madras were, to obtain full reparation of all injuries, and eventually to attack the tyrant in his capital. The Council, on the 8th January, advised the Court of Directors of the recapture of Calcutta, and, on the 31st, of the success against Hooghly. In the latter despatch, they adverted to the instructions from the President at Fort St. George, directing that Colonel Clive, as commander of all the forces, might be furnished with plans for a treaty with the Nabob, having placed four lacs of rupees at his command, and empowered him to deviate from the whole or part of such plans, should he consider them to be inconsistent with the Company's interests.

Clive's powers.

The Council at Calcutta appeared to view with strong feelings of jealousy the position in which Clive stood towards them by virtue of those instructions. They remarked, in their letter to the Directors, that "the authority the Select Committee at Fort St. George have assumed, in appointing Colonel Clive commander-in-chief of the forces in Bengal, is so unaccountable, that we cannot avoid taking notice of it as an encroachment of the rights and trusts invested in us." Notwithstanding the important services Clive had already

Council at Calcutta expostulate.

Watson and to Vice Admiral Pocock, for their eminent and signal services to the Company."—"Resolved, That the thanks of this General Court be given to Lieut.-Colonel Robert Clive, for his eminent and signal services to this Company."

1757.
BENGAL.

already rendered, and the probability of the Nabob's advancing towards Calcutta, the Council added, "we have required of Colonel Clive to recede from the independent powers given him by the Select Committee, but he has refused to surrender that authority; we must therefore leave it to you, Honourable Sirs, to take notice of so injurious a conduct in your servants on the coast."

Clive explains the reason for retaining his powers.

It had been arranged that Clive should return to Madras, when the service on which he had been sent was completed. It is fully apparent that he intended to have acted upon that arrangement, and he only departed from it in order to secure the more important interests of the Company in Bengal. He wrote to the Court, on the 1st February, dated in camp near Calcutta, of the measures which he had adopted for placing the presidency in a proper state of defence. He alluded to the posture of affairs at Madras with M. Bussy, and observed, "All circumstances concur to make me wish a speedy accommodation in this province, both with the Nabob and the French, and it is my ardent desire to be enabled to embark for the coast this month, with some of the troops; but it is hardly to be expected that matters will be sufficiently settled to admit of it. I am so sensible of the consequence the trade of this province is of to the Company, that I think I ought not, on any account, to draw off part of the troops while a fair prospect remains of a speedy and advantageous

1757. BENGAL. tageous conclusion of affairs, either by force of arms or a treaty." Adverting to the powers which he possessed, and to the circumstance that the Council had left the negotiations to be transacted by the admiral and himself, he stated, "All propositions the Council at Calcutta make will be attended to; and, for my part, you may be assured that, notwithstanding my independent command, I shall endeavour to maintain a perfect harmony with them, and act throughout with their participation. They thought proper, some time ago, to demand a surrender of my commission as commander-in-chief, and that I would put myself under their orders. While I looked upon myself as obliged to refuse, in justice to those who had entrusted me with such powers, I represented that I had no intentions of making use of any independent powers, unless they induced me to it by necessity, for we had but one common interest to pursue, which was that of the Company, and as long as that was kept in view, they would always find me ready to follow their instructions."

Colonel Clive's communication appears to have been governed by a just sense of the position in which he was placed, and to have manifested every disposition to act in harmony with the Council, who felt aggrieved at their power having been set aside. At such a juncture, all personal feeling should have been waived for the common good, especially in favour of an officer who had evinced

1757. BENGAL.

evinced qualifications admirably calculated to meet great emergencies, and whose foresight, even on the occasion in question, appears to have given him a just claim to the confidence which had been reposed in him.

Nabob advances with his army to Calcutta.

Two days after the despatch of the foregoing letter to the Directors, intelligence was received at the Presidency, that the Nabob, on learning the fate of Hooghly, was highly exasperated, and had quitted his capital, marching at the head of his forces towards Calcutta. On the 3d February, he offered to restore the settlements and to make reparation; while, at the same time, the van of his army appeared in sight, passing towards Calcutta, immediately without reach of the cannon of the battery to the eastward.

Coja Patras, the Armenian who brought the letter containing the offer, declared that the Nabob would wait at Gunge until the conference was over. Two gentlemen were accordingly deputed to meet him, and to carry an assurance of the satisfaction with which his pacific intentions had been received. The Nabob had nevertheless proceeded on to Dum-Dum: the deputation immediately followed, and only came up with him in the town of Calcutta. On pointing out to him his departure from what had been arranged, and expostulating against his army remaining in the vicinity of the Presidency, he haughtily refused to withdraw his forces.

Colonel

1757. BENGAL. Colonel Clive, perceiving that he was merely attempting to amuse him with overtures; considering also the state of confusion in which Calcutta had already been plunged by the Nabob's presence; and foreseeing the fatal consequences that would ensue from the entrance of his forces into the town, determined, notwithstanding the small number of troops he could collect, to attack the enemy the following morning before daybreak. The morning was foggy. Clive penetrated the enemy's camp, and for two hours did great execution; but the fog not clearing off, he was unable to follow up his advantages. On the 6th February, the Nabob removed to Dum-Dum, where a treaty was concluded, by which he ratified all the privileges which the English had enjoyed, and engaged to make restitution of their various settlements at Calcutta, Cossimbuzar, and Dacca, with their money and effects. They were likewise permitted to fortify Calcutta. Perwannahs were granted for freedom of trade, and privileges to the Company's dustucks,* and they were allowed to erect a Mint at Calcutta.

Treaty with the Nabob.

Intelligence was at this time received that the Affghauns had defeated the Mogul, that their leader had seized the government, assuming the title of Ahmud Shah, orders having been given for coins, in the province of Bengal, to be struck in

* *Vide* Printed Treaties, pages 1 to 6.

in the name of the new Emperor, and that the Nabob was advancing to his frontier to make an alliance with his neighbour, the Nabob of Lucknow, sometimes called *Owd*, for their mutual support in the then disturbed state of the empire. 1757. BENGAL.

There were strong reasons to believe that the French had instilled into the mind of the Nabob feelings of jealousy towards the English. Offers of neutrality had been made to them, at the commencement of the operations against the Nabob, to which they gave no reply. Colonel Clive intended to have attacked Chandernagore, but abstained, the Nabob having declared that it would be a violation of the treaty so lately concluded. A request was shortly afterwards received from the Governor of Chandernagore, for a neutrality within the Ganges, to which, at the instance of the Council, Clive assented. He announced the result to the Court of Directors on the 22d February, and stated, "All operations, therefore, are now over, and I may hope, in a few days, to take my passage for the coast, with the satisfaction of having left your affairs well re-established, and a general tranquillity in the provinces." French instigate the Nabob. Neutrality proposed. Clive contemplates returning to Madras.

Scarcely had this despatch been sent off for Europe, when it was found that the proposed neutrality with the French had not been confirmed by the authorities at Pondicherry, and that the French were still intriguing with the Nabob. Operations against the French.

Clive,

1757. BENGAL. Clive, in communication with Admiral Watson, accordingly determined to attack Chandernagore: it being ascertained that the Nabob would not interfere, and that we were at liberty to act as we pleased towards our European rivals. On the 13th March, the fort was summoned: no answer being received the western battery was attacked the following morning. Various operations were carried on until the 23d, when it surrendered. The Governor and Council of Chandernagore were removed to Chinsura.

Chandernagore surrenders.

The Council being apprised that the Dutch not only harboured the French prisoners who had escaped, but also furnished them with money, guides, and even arms, Clive summoned all the French on parole to repair to his camp, and insisted that the late Governor and Council of Chandernagore should remove to Calcutta. The remainder of the French were required to reside at Chandernagore, or any where to the south of Chinsura.*

Nabob's officers and people oppose his government.

A few days after this occurrence, intelligence was received by Clive, then at the presidency, that Seraje-ud-Dowlah's conduct had completely disgusted his principal officers, who, with a great majority of his people, were strongly opposed to his retaining the government of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa; they

* Letter to the Court from Colonel Clive, camp near Chandernagore, 16th April 1757.

1757.
BENGAL.

they desired to know whether the Council would aid in the restoration of Jaffier Ally Khan, who had also sent an agent to ascertain their feelings towards himself. It was apparent that the Nabob had become decidedly inimical to the interests of the English. He had espoused and protected M. Law and his party after the reduction of Chandernagore; and it was also discovered that he was in correspondence with M. Bussy on the coast, to whom he had made considerable presents, with an invitation to march towards Bengal. He had not acted up to his treaty with the Company, —his army was hostile to him, and it was clear that, whether we took part or not in favour of Meer Jaffier, a revolution would ensue for the purpose of deposing Seraje-ud-Dowlah, whilst our abstaining from all interference might, in the peculiar situation we then stood, place the interests of the Company in a very questionable position. Under these circumstances, with the means also of making their own terms with Jaffier, and obtaining some satisfaction for the inhabitants of Calcutta, in order to relieve them from their heavy losses in the capture, besides establishing the tranquillity of the country, and cutting off the influence of the French, the Council unanimously resolved to support the views of Jaffier Ally Khan. The terms of a treaty were accordingly drawn out, and a deputation appointed to wait upon him. The articles were discussed, agreed to, and signed on

Nabob inimical to the English.

Reasons why Council concurred in his being deposed.

1757. BENGAL. on the 19th May.* By this treaty Jaffier agreed to pay the Company a crore of rupees for their losses in the capture of Calcutta, and to grant compensation to the English inhabitants for their loss in their plundered effects. All the land lying to the south of Calcutta, as far as Calpee, was to be under the zemindary of the Company, with other possessions.

Various additional circumstances arose, which confirmed the report of Seraje-ud-Dowlah being in communication with M. Bussy. The march of the Company's troops was pressingly urged towards Moorshedabad, in support of Meer Jaffier. Colonel Clive proceeded on the 13th June, with all his forces, amounting to only 1,000 Europeans and 2,000 sepoys, with eight pieces of cannon. On the 18th, he took the fort of Cutwa; on the 22d, in the evening, the army crossed the river; and on the 23d June, the battle of Plassey took place. The most decisive victory was obtained, by the prudence and valour of Colonel Clive, over the Nabob; his army being dispersed, and he himself obliged to seek safety in flight from Moorshedabad. Meer Jaffier was in waiting at that city to receive Clive; who, after the first salutations were over, led him to the musnud; and, placing him upon it, made obeisance to him as lord of the three provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and

* *Vide* Printed Treaties, pages 6 to 23.

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BENGAL.

and Orissa, presenting, at the same time, a plate of gold coin. All the omrahs then present likewise paid their homage and presented gold, Meer Jaffier being afterwards publicly proclaimed as Nabob.

Intelligence having reached the Directors, in the month of July 1757, of the recapture of Calcutta, they determined to issue a new commission of government. The Court disapproved of the authority assumed by the Madras council, on the original deputation of Colonel Clive to Bengal, but resolved, notwithstanding the sentiments of the Council at Calcutta being opposed to his independent powers, to name Clive (*if in Bengal*) at the head of it. "Should he have returned to his station on the coast of Coromandel, as there was reason to believe would be the case, then the other parties" named were to take their respective stations and rank.

Clive appointed to the head of the Government in Bengal by the Court of Directors.

In the month of September following, the Directors received a letter from Colonel Clive, dated the 22d of February, intimating that "he hoped, in a few days, to take his passage for Madras, leaving all in tranquillity in Bengal."* The

* This is corroborated by a letter which Colonel Clive addressed to the Select Committee at Fort St. George, and by the application which he made to Admiral Watson, to place at his disposal a twenty-gun brig, to take such troops as were left to Madras, he intending to follow immediately the Nabob's engagements had been concluded; as the admiral and fleet were not

1757. BENGAL. Commission revoked on Clive's supposed departure.

The Court, on the 11th November, accordingly revoked their commission of the 3d August preceeding, and appointed those gentlemen members who, they concluded, would be at Calcutta. The custom which had prevailed was to be adhered to, *viz.* the three senior members taking the chair each successively for four months; and a Select Committee, consisting of five of the members, was appointed to transact the affairs with the country governments, and to preserve secret such of their proceedings as they might judge expedient.

Council at Calcutta request Clive to take the office of President.

These orders arrived at Calcutta in June 1758; on the 26th of which month, the Council resolved, in the peculiar state of affairs which detained Colonel Clive in Bengal, to request him to take upon himself the office of permanent President. Clive signified his assent to the Council in the following terms, *viz.*

1758.

Clive accepts it, but expresses dissatisfaction at having been excluded by the Court.

"Though I think I have cause to be dissatisfied with the Court of Directors, for laying me aside in their new form of government, without any reason assigned, after having named me as head of the General Committee in the letter of the 3d August last, yet, animated by the noble example of

not to sail for the coast till much later in the year. These points, though apparently trifling, are material, to shew that it was not a systematic course of predetermined conquest by which he was actuated, but that one circumstance arose after another, which led to the series of extraordinary and important events in which he so signally distinguished himself.

1758.

BENGAL.

of public spirit which you have set me, I have determined to waive all private considerations where the general good is concerned; and as there is no doubt that the government of a single person, involved as we are now with the country powers, must have infinite advantages over the complicated form of government established from home, I shall from that motive (though both my health and private concerns strongly require my returning to Europe) accept the offer you have done me the honour to make me, till such time as our employers have appointed a president in the usual form."

It appears to have escaped Clive's recollection, that the Court had every reason to conclude he had returned to Madras, and that they were also ignorant of the circumstances which led to the battle of Plassey, as well as of the victory and its results. When, however, the intelligence of his retention in Bengal, and of his subsequent proceedings, became known to the Directors, in the month of February 1758, they anticipated the resolution of the Bengal Council; for on the 8th of March they appointed him, in consideration of his eminent and repeated services, to be sole President and Governor of Fort William, in case it should suit his health and convenience to remain in India; adding, "Colonel Clive, as governor, is, of course, to be added to the Select Committee appointed by our letter of

Court learning that Clive remained in Bengal appoint him sole President.

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the 11th November, of which he is to be the chief and presiding member."

These orders were issued and despatched from England three months before the resolution of the Council at Calcutta was passed, appointing Clive president.

It was doubtless in ignorance of these facts, that Orme and Scrafton imbibed the notion, that the Home authorities manifested neglect towards Clive on the occasion in question. Whatever feelings might have been raised in Clive's mind, they appear to have been fully effaced by the receipt of the Court's orders of March, which he acknowledged from Calcutta in the following terms:* "Words can but poorly express the sentiments of my heart on receipt of your general address. Please to accept, in return, all that the most lively gratitude can offer, and be assured my utmost endeavours shall be exerted in the service of those, who have done more justice to my merits than they can pretend to deserve."

Clive thanks the Court for their nomination of him.

M. Bussy, the commander of the French forces on the coast, was involved in considerable difficulties with the principal Rajah of Golconda, who had sent letters to Colonel Clive, requesting the Company's aid. An expedition was despatched at the instance of Clive from Calcutta, in the month of October, under Colonel Forde, consisting

Supply of troops from Bengal to Madras.

* Letter from Colonel Clive to the Court of Directors, 30th December 1758.

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ing of 500 Europeans, artillery included, and 2,000 sepoys, on board the Company's ships; Mr. Johnson, a Company's servant, being previously sent to the coast to prepare for the arrival of the troops.

Council urge supply of troops from Europe.

In urging a supply of troops from Europe, as necessary to secure the great acquisitions already made, the Council observed, "though matters are perfectly quiet at present, 'tis hard to say how long the calm will last; and such is the nature of this country and government, that the only certain expedient of securing their friendship is, by keeping up such a force as will render it unsafe for them to break with us, and the large addition of territory you have acquired by the late treaty has afforded the means of paying the troops."

In December, the Council again urged on the Court of Directors the absolute necessity of sending a sufficient force, "in order to fix the great revolution that has been here brought about in their favour."

In this infant state of the Company's political power, it is difficult to conceive the obstacles which they had to surmount in supplying the necessary succours to enable their servants to maintain their ground, amidst the jealousy and opposition of European and native enemies.

Owing to the war in Germany, and to the extended operations in North America, the Court of Directors could scarcely obtain any recruits.* Through

* The records of the Company bear ample testimony to the anxiety manifested by the Court of Directors to meet the

1758. BENGAL. Through the special interposition of the Duke of Marlborough, then Master-General of the Ordnance, the Court were enabled to secure three officers from the Royal Regiment of Artillery, to aid in fortifying the settlements against any future attacks.

In reply to the remonstrances contained in subsequent despatches, in consequence of what the Council at Calcutta conceived to be the inattention on the part of the Court of Directors to their earnest requests for troops, the Court remarked:*—

Had not his Majesty been graciously pleased to order a large military reinforcement to proceed to India this season, yours, as well as the presidencies of Fort St. George and Bombay, would have been unavoidably supplied by the Company in a very short degree: for so long as the demand for the national service subsists, it has been, and will be, almost impossible, notwithstanding our outmost efforts, to raise a number of recruits nearly adequate to what our service requires.

The great number of forces granted by his Majesty, including those of this year, will enable us to give you a garrison of 2,000 Europeans during the war; but, upon Mr. Clive's sensible and judicious plan, the forces of our presidencies, at least of Madras and Bengal, will be in common aiding each other, as the different situation of affairs

repeated requisitions from Bengal for aid, both in troops and military stores. It was during the operations from 1758 to 1764, that the first Lord Amherst, uncle of the present Earl, so highly distinguished himself as Commander-in-chief of the British forces.

* Letter to Bengal, April 1760.

affairs may demand. Under such a well-concerted union, your garrison may at times be more numerous, or often no more than prudence may deem necessary for your protection against the natives, as happened when you determined upon that noble step of sending Colonel Forde to Mazulipatam. However, thus circumstanced and cemented, you will be a security to each other, and in all human probability out of the reach of danger. The forces that went abroad last year and are now destined for India, will demonstrate that your employers labour incessantly to strengthen and protect their settlements, the glorious successes at home having enabled the Government to grant us large succours, and we must gratefully confess the Ministry's care of this Company. The many remonstrances in almost every letter, would have been spared, if you had reflected properly on our cruel and dangerous situation; our mercantile concerns always giving place to men and stores, when we could possibly obtain them; ever distressed for tonnage, as we carry abroad for the Government seldom less than 1,000 tons annually, exclusive of their men and baggage. The heavy demorage incurred by ships detained by accident or otherwise in India; the immense expenses at Madras, with very scanty returns; your own charges very great, those of Bombay beyond all bounds; our settlements in Sumatra, at the same time, requiring large sums to put them in some state of security against enemies and dangerous neighbours; if these considerations had been duly weighed, your injurious insinuations of being neglected must have been turned into praise, that your employers could do so much under such untoward circumstances. We ourselves look back with wonder at the difficulties we have surmounted, and which, with our contracted capital, must have been impossible, if the Proprietors, generously and without a murmur, had not consented to reduce their dividend 25 per cent.; but

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1758. but with all our economy and care, unless our servants studiously attend to lessen their charges and increase our advantages, the burthen will be too great for us to bear much longer.

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We agree with you, that there must always be a respectable force kept up in Bengal, to secure our noble, and, we hope, improving acquisitions, and to guard against the machinations of our treacherous neighbours, who have already begun to shew themselves; we are determined that the fixed garrison at Calcutta shall not be less than 1,500 Europeans (the blacks at your own discretion); and with such a force, we apprehend, you will always influence and govern the affairs of Bengal.

The public papers have lately had an article, importing that they write from Paris that the Comte D'Artois, Le Berryer, and La Diligente frigates, were to sail the first fair wind from L'Orient for Asia, and were to be joined by five or six other ships from different ports on the coast; and by private intelligence we further hear, that the regiment De Cambyse, one of the oldest and most complete battalions in France, was embarking on the said ships with the utmost expedition, in hopes of reaching India before our troops could arrive.

We flatter ourselves, notwithstanding the expedition the French are using in fitting out this armament, that not only the first embarkation of our troops will reach India before the enemy, but likewise the second, which are now proceeding on the Bengal ships, and that his Majesty's ships will have also joined Mr. Pocock, so that we are not in pain on account of this further effort of the enemy.

In December 1758, Colonel Clive, adverting to the probability of his quitting India in the early part of the following year, wrote to the Court: "After

"After the battle of Plassey, I thought my commission of commander-in-chief would have ended there, and that I might have returned to the coast, and from thence to England; but when intestine troubles arose, and the situation of your affairs required my remaining up the country, I did not hesitate to give my services where so justly due." 1758. BENGAL. Clive's reasons for not quitting India.

In consequence of the large increase of the Company's forces, and the encouragement which was given by their European opponents to the desertion of their men, an Act was passed which empowered them to hold courts-martial for the punishment of mutiny and desertion.*

Tranquillity prevailed in India; but as Jaffier Khan, the Nabob, was advanced in years, the Council observed, "that it was impossible to say how long such a state of affairs might continue. His son is cruel, and every day's experience teaches us, that Musselmen will remain no longer true to their engagements than when a successful opportunity may offer to the contrary." The truth of this observation was fully established in the early part of the following year.

M. Law had been traversing the country as far as Delhi, with the view of engaging the interest of the king in his favour. In February 1759, the Company were opposed to the Shazada, (the title given 1759. Hostilities with the Shazada.

* The 9 Geo. II., which remained in force until the Consolidating Act of 1823, 4 Geo. IV. c. 81.

1759. BENGAL.

given to the king's eldest son), who had fled from his father's court, and being joined by Law advanced towards Patna. In order to arrest the progress of the prince and to support the Nabob, whose affairs, from his unfavourable position with his zemindars and the arrears of pay due to his troops were involved in great embarrassment, Colonel Clive took the field.* He marched with the utmost expedition to relieve Patna, which city, as well as the province of Bahar, was in danger. The Shazada had arrived at the river Caramnassa, which divides the countries of Oude and Bahar. Clive's operations were successful. The Shazada was compelled to retreat, the affairs in the provinces being brought to a satisfactory termination.

The Shazada retreats from Patna.

In the month of August, the Dutch having manifested a disposition to increase their influence by the introduction of a considerable number of European troops at Chinsura, Clive, in communication

* In the Council's letter to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated Fort William, 19th March 1759, it is said: "The President had a meeting with the Nabob the 9th instant, and after laying before him in the strongest manner the discontent and disaffection of his jemautdars, and representing his treacherous behaviour towards them and non-payment of his people, motives which had encouraged the king's son to this present attempt, the most advisable measures were concerted for the success of the expedition; one of his principal jemautdars, Cossim Ally Cawn, set out for Salabad to take the command of such part of the forces as were arrived there, with which he was to proceed directly for Patna."

cation with the Nabob, detached a force under Colonel Forde against them, and at the same time attacked their shipping, which had advanced up the river. Both operations were successful; the power of the Dutch was so reduced, that they agreed to an arrangement, by which they were to bear all the charges that had been incurred in the course of the operations. In December, the Directors were advised of the grant of a jaghire to Colonel Clive in the following terms: "The Mogul having conferred on Colonel Clive the honour of a munsubdarry, the subah of these provinces, from a sense of the very eminent services rendered him by Colonel Clive, particularly on his late expedition to the northward, has thought proper to present him with the annual rent of those lands which were before paid to himself agreeable to treaty. This will be more particularly explained to you by a copy of the Nabob's phirmaund for this grant, entered after our consultations of the 6th September; in consequence of which we have paid to Colonel Clive what was before paid the subah, and shall continue in future to account with him instead of the Government."*

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Colonel Clive embarked from Calcutta for Europe in February 1760, and reached Portsmouth in

* The perwannah or grant was sent down by Mr. Hastings, then at Moradabaug, to the Council at Calcutta, 5th Sept. 1759. (*Vide* Consultations.)

1760. BENGAL. Clive proceeds to England.

in July. On the 16th of that month he waited upon the Court of Directors, when he received from their Chairman the expression of their "unanimous thanks for his many eminent and unparalleled services."*

* In September following, the Proprietors marked their sense of Colonel Clive's services by a public resolution of thanks to him, Admiral Pocock, and Colonel Lawrence. They also resolved unanimously, That the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, when they wait upon Vice-admiral Pocock, Colonel Clive, and Colonel Lawrence, will desire those gentlemen to give their consent that their portraits or statues be taken in order to be placed in some conspicuous parts of this house, that their eminent and signal services to this Company may be ever had in remembrance.

CHAPTER III.

1760.

BENGAL.

Mr. HOLWELL acted as president of the Council in Bengal until the arrival of Mr. Vansittart from Madras on the 27th July, who had been appointed by the Court successor to Col. Clive.

Mr. Vansittart succeeds as President.

Mr. Vansitart had scarcely assumed the office of president before the province of Bengal was involved in another revolution. Its internal administration had been so wretchedly conducted by Jaffier Ally Khan, that the Council concurred in his removal. He was succeeded by his son-in-law, Cossim Ally Khan.

Jaffier Ally Khan deposed.

Cossim Ally Khan, his son-in-law, succeeds.

From the terms in which the event was announced to the Court of Directors, they had every reason to conclude that the result would place their possessions in a state of permanent security. Besides a confirmation of the treaty with Meer Jaffier and the payment of the balance of his debt, possession was acquired of the countries of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong, in full right, to be managed as the Council might judge best for the interest of the Company. Other important points were enumerated, and the Council added,

Acquisitions by Company.

"We

1760. BENGAL.

"We shall at present defer entering upon a detail of the prodigious benefit of these concessions." Referring to a narrative prepared by Mr. Vansittart, they observed that it was a document which might be esteemed "a perfect manifestation sent to the world of the propriety of the measures we have pursued, and of our adherence to the good of the kingdom."*

In January following, Mr. Vansittart addressed the Court as to the state in which he found affairs in Calcutta, and the circumstances which led to Cossim Ally Khan being placed on the musnud.

"I found, as I suspected, great difficulties to struggle with, from the general confusion and disaffection of the country, and the very low state of the Company's treasury. One or the other of these resolutions was immediately necessary—either to drop our connexions with the country government and withdraw our assistance: or to insist on more ample, as well as more certain provision for the support of the Company's expense. The first was dangerous and dishonourable, as it would have given up the country and the Nabob a prey to a multitude of enemies. The other alternative was resolved on.

A favourable opportunity offered of procuring for the Company a cession of the districts of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong, and an agreement was entered into with all possible regard to our alliance with the Nabob. In its consequences, however it was the cause of his resigning the subadaree

* President and Council to the Court of Directors, 10th November 1760.

subadaree and retiring to Calcutta. This change happened without the least disturbance or a man hurt. The old Nabob was received in Calcutta with all the honours due to his rank, and resides there with ease and security. The Company are in possession of the noble territory ceded to them, and we are in a condition of opposing, nay, in a fair way of getting the better of all our enemies. 1760. BENGAL.

I know, however, that there are many who, led, some by ignorance, but more by prejudice, strive to overlook the necessity of the resolutions taken, the manner and circumstances of their execution, and the advantages procured for the Company, and endeavour to represent the measures as a premeditated breach of treaties, and the consequences as hurtful to the Company, insinuating always that the Select Committee, who unanimously resolved on this plan, and particularly myself, had interested views.

The same motives have been attributed, more or less, to each succeeding government, which has found extended measures terminating in new acquisitions essential to the support of the British interests in India.

In the month of December, the Shazada again approached Bahar, when the Council determined to adopt vigorous measures for the purpose of effectually expelling him from the borders of that province. A considerable force, under the command of Major Carnac, completely defeated him on the 15th January, on the banks of the Servan, M. Law, with his detachment and guns, being taken prisoner.* Shortly

Shazada again advances towards Company's provinces, and is completely defeated.

1761.

* Mr. Warren Hastings was at this time called from Moradabaug to assist the president in his correspondence with the country government.

1761. BENGAL.

The king murdered—the Shazada succeeds.

Shortly after these events, the death of the king, by the hand of his vizier, Ghazee-ood-Deen, opened the way for the Shazada to establish his right to the throne. This prince, to whom we had so lately been opposed, now joined the English forces. Since his defeat, he had remained almost alone in the neighbourhood of Patna, and came over without any positive engagement. He was, however, assured that his person would be held sacred, and that he should be maintained in a suitable manner as long as he might remain with the Company's forces.

The Abdallees,* previous to their retiring from Delhi, declared the Shazada king, by the name of Shah Alum. The Mahrattas, from whom he had chiefly to expect opposition, on account of their connexion with the vizier, had been so much weakened through their last defeat by the Abdallees, and so torn by divisions in their own government, as to be incapable of making any considerable efforts. Shuja Dowla, the Nabob of Oude, whose territories then extended from the Caramnassa to within a short distance of Delhi, had advanced as far as Benares to meet the king and attend him to his capital.

The Bengal Council were averse to engage in an expedition that was to carry the troops so far as Delhi, particularly at a period when the contemplated

* A tribe of Affghauns.

templated expedition from Madras, against the French islands, had deprived them of the aid of additional forces from the coast. They nevertheless felt that delay might materially injure a cause, which, if supported, would ultimately tend to the security and tranquillity of the Company's provinces. They accordingly authorized Colonel Coote, then at Patna, to advise the king to proceed to join Shuja Dowla; and to assure him, that if he should think it necessary to carry a detachment of our troops to Delhi, they should be sent to him immediately after the rains. 1761. BENGAL.

Intelligence having been received by the Court of Directors of these proceedings, they wrote in the following terms to Bengal:* "If your endeavours for settling the Shazada upon the throne of his ancestors could be carried into execution without risk to the Company and at a moderate expense, it may secure him in our interest, and be the means of settling the peace and quiet of the kingdom; but, as a transaction of this kind depends upon many circumstances and unforeseen events, and you have most probably already embarked in this undertaking, we are entirely at a loss to give you any directions, or even our sentiments thereupon, in any other than these general terms: that we hope you have acted, and will act, with the utmost caution, and on considering all circumstances, with

* 30th September 1761.

1761. BENGAL. with that prudence and attention which an affair of such a serious and important nature requires.

"This is the third revolution in Bengal, wherein the very being of the Company has been, and from their consequences may still be, at stake. Your advancing Jaffier Ally Cawn to the subahship, in the room of Suraja Dowla, was undoubtedly a necessary measure, as well for the good of the country in general as the interest of the Company in particular: your afterwards deposing Jaffier Ally Cawn, and settling Cossim Ally Cawn in his room, we hope was done also with the same view. Upon this presumption and confidence, that no other motives whatsoever had any influence upon you, we must look upon the measures pursued upon this occasion to be unavoidable. At the same time, we cannot help observing, that it is to the great regard the Company have always had to a faithful observance of their agreements, that they acquired, and have hitherto preserved, a reputation with the natives of India: we could have wished, therefore, the situation of affairs would have admitted keeping terms with Jaffier Ally Cawn, that even the least handle for a pretence might not have offered to prejudiced people to make use of, to throw any reflections upon this transaction."

The king did not wait for the troops, but proceeded towards Delhi accompanied by Major Carnac,

1761. BENGAL.

Carnac, who was deputed to escort him to the borders of the provinces. The Nabob of Oude who had been constituted by the king his vizier, supplied him with considerable pecuniary aid. His majesty, on the application of Major Carnac, promised to grant sunnuds for the Company's privileges and possessions in Bengal, whenever a proper tribute should be remitted. "The king also offered to confer on the Company the dewannee of Bengal, on condition of their being answerable for the royal revenues;" but as the Council were sensible that their acceptance of the post would cause jealousy and ill-will between them and the Nabob, they thought it more prudent to decline it. This determination was fully approved by the Court of Directors, "If we can secure our present possessions and privileges in Bengal, preserve the peace of the province and the Nabob in the government, and prevent the borders from being invaded or disturbed by the neighbouring rajahs or other powers, we shall be fully satisfied, and think our forces judiciously employed in answering these principal points: for we are by no means desirous of making further acquisitions, or engaging our forces in very distant projects, unless the most absolute necessity should require it, to answer one or other of the political views afore-mentioned. Your refusal of the dewannee of Bengal, offered by the king, was certainly right, and we are well

Dewanee offered to the Company, but declined by Council.

1761. BENGAL. satisfied with the just and prudent reasons you give for declining that offer."

1762. Differences anticipated with the Nabob.

The Council had at this time reason to believe "that some busy persons had been attempting to foment jealousies between them and the Nabob, Cossim Ally Cawn, who continued in Bahar." In order to discover the authors, and to preserve tranquillity, Mr. Hastings was deputed to wait upon the Nabob. Mr. Amyatt and some other of the members of the Council proposed that the instructions to Mr. Hastings should contain a clause authorizing him to demand of the Nabob the twenty lacs of rupees, which it was asserted had been offered by him when the treaty was made, as a present to the gentlemen of the Select Committee. Mr. Vansittart refused to concur in this demand. It was nevertheless made, but was rejected by the Nabob, who declared that he had fulfilled the terms of the treaty, and that he placed full confidence in the Company, on whom he entirely depended. The Directors, on being acquainted with the circumstance, stated that they were at a loss to comprehend upon what grounds the majority of the Council, contrary to the remonstrances made by the President, could venture to authorize Mr. Hastings to demand of the Nabob twenty lacs of rupees, upon the bare pretence that he had made an offer of the sum to Mr. Vansittart and the Select Committee, at the time of making the treaty for his accession, which had been

been then so properly and so honourably refused. 1762.
"We rejoice (observed the Court) at the just and BENGAL.
spirited refusal he gave to that unwarrantable demand."

Circumstances having arisen to induce the Pre- 1763.
sident to visit the Nabob, he proceeded to Mon- President visits the Nabob.
gheer, where the subject of the disputes between the Company's gomastahs and the officers of government was attempted to be arranged. It was apparent that the Company's officers, out of reach of immediate inspection, had exercised an almost absolute authority, under the sanction of the English name, carrying on their business by violent and inequitable means, and refusing to pay any duties. The President felt that the Differences on account of the inland trade.
King's phirmaunds were never intended to enable the English to engross the whole inland trade of the country, to the prejudice of the natives, and he accordingly made such a settlement with the Nabob as appeared reasonable.

The native officers belonging to the Nabob presumed upon these concessions, and greatly abused the authority with which they were invested, being guilty of such violence and oppression as to call for some restraining power. Various representations were made to the Nabob, and suggestions offered for the purpose of effecting an amicable arrangement: but he refused to accede

* Letter to Bengal, 13th May 1763.

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accede to any of the propositions, or to make satisfaction for the injury inflicted by his officers, complaints of which were received by the Council from all quarters. It was at last intimated to him by the Council, that a perseverance in refusing all redress would inevitably lead to an open rupture.

Deputation appointed to prevent a rupture with the Nabob.

To prevent, if possible, things coming to extremities, a deputation, consisting of Messrs. Amyatt and Hay, was sent to the Nabob, for the purpose of explaining more fully the various points in dispute. They set out from Moorshedabad on the 25th April, and reached Mongheer on the 12th May. The Nabob received them with the usual formalities; but their representations proved wholly unavailing. The Nabob demanded that our troops should be withdrawn from Patna to Mongheer, and he seized five hundred stand of arms, sent for their use, until his demand had been complied with.

Nabob seizes some arms at Patna.

Measures contemplated in event of a rupture.

These circumstances being made known to the Council at Calcutta, the majority determined upon a course of proceeding in case of a rupture, and sent orders to the Chief and Council at Patna, in such an event, to take possession of that city, provided they thought themselves strong enough, and if not, they were to take a secure position until supported by the arrival of troops; for which purpose, Major Adams would be ordered forthwith from Calcutta.

On the 11th June, the intelligence from the deputation

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deputation at Patna left no room to doubt that hostilities would take place. On their delivering a letter from the President to the Nabob, representing the unlawfulness of seizing the arms, and that we could not withdraw our troops from Patna on the footing of a preliminary demand, the Nabob declared "there was war;" adding, that he knew Mr. Ellis, the chief of Patna, was his avowed enemy, and would employ the troops to the detriment of his affairs. Whatever might be charged to the Nabob's indisposition to come to terms of accommodation, it is clear that the opinion of the Court of Directors was strongly adverse to the conduct of Mr. Ellis and other servants, in the matter of the inland trade, as they were dismissed the service by orders from home when these circumstances became known.

On the 20th June, the several members of the Council submitted their views as to a future plan of government, should a revolution take place.

Deputation fired upon, by Nabob's orders.

Intelligence was shortly received, that the deputation, passing the river by Moorshedabad, on their return to Calcutta, were fired upon by orders from the Nabob. Mr. Amyatt, who had been at the head of the deputation, was with many others killed, and the rest taken prisoners.

Attempt to seize Patna, by Mr. Ellis and others, fails.

Previously to this catastrophe, accounts had reached Mr. Ellis at Patna, that the Nabob was determined upon hostilities. That gentleman, in conjunction with Captain Carstairs, immediately planned

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planned an attack upon the Mogul guard, for the purpose of seizing the city. Early on the 25th June, they were in entire possession for four hours: but the project failed, through the sepoys having dispersed for the purpose of plundering. The Nabob's governor regained the city, the English were routed, and Mr. Ellis, Mr. Lushington, and many other gentlemen, taken prisoners. When the council at Calcutta were apprized of these events, they determined on deposing Meer Cossim.

Meer Cossim deposed, and Jaffier Ally Khan again raised to the musnud.

On the 7th July 1763, Jaffier Khan, who had been residing at Calcutta since the accession of his son-in-law, was proclaimed, and war declared against Cossim, who retired towards Mongheer.

Enemy defeated.

Meer Jaffier set out to join the army, after concluding a treaty on the 10th July, ratifying former privileges, and agreeing to maintain a given number of troops, a resident from the Governor and Council was to reside with him, and a person on his part at Calcutta, to hold communication with the Governor and Council.* On the 19th July, Major Adams engaged the enemy, and took the fort of Cutwa. On the 2d August, a very severe battle took place near Sooty. The stand which the enemy made was "uncommon for native troops, having been engaged for nearly four hours." The siege of Rajmahal was commenced on the 29th August, and continued

* Printed treaties, page 32.

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continued to the 5th September, when the assault took place with little loss, and the fort surrendered.

Offers to induce Cossim to spare the lives of the English, rejected.

Having exerted every endeavour to preserve the lives of the English gentlemen who were in the possession of Cossim, Major Adams offered the latter permission to retire from Mongheer to Rotas, whither he had moved his family and effects, if he would release his prisoners.

The offer was of no avail: the army accordingly pushed on to Mongheer, which they took on the 11th October; and here they learned, that Meer Cossim had caused all the English to be murdered through the instrumentality of Sumroo, a renegade French soldier, and that Cossim had fled to Patna. Thither the English force hastened, and took it by storm on the 6th November.

King and Shuja Dowla proffer aid to the Company's troops.

During the operations against the Nabob, the king and Shuja Dowla advanced with their army within a day's march of Benares, and sent a detachment, under one of their principal officers, to that city. Shuja Dowla wrote to Jaffier Ally Khan and the President, and likewise to Major Adams, that he was coming with an intention of assisting our arms against Cossim. He received no encouragement to fulfil his intentions, being informed that our forces were more than sufficient to defeat all our enemies: and all that we desired was his securing Cossim, should he make his flight in that direction.

President's view of affairs.

Mr. Vansittart addressed the Court regarding the hostilities

1763. BENGAL. hostilities with the Nabob, before he had received the accounts of the massacre: "I have been disappointed in my hopes of the country's remaining in tranquillity, until your pleasure concerning the demands made by the Council upon the Nabob could be known.

"Mutual jealousies and suspicions had gained so much strength, that not a day passed, after Messrs. Amyatt and Hay had opened their commission to the Nabob, without some aggravation of the disputes. Mr. Ellis, whom I have never scrupled to call the head of the party which he formed the moment of his arrival in Bengal, and has carefully nourished ever since, had at this time a sure majority in the Council, and I endeavoured in vain to restrain the violence of their measures. Himself, by his station in Patna, had it daily in his power to create animosities between the Nabob's people and ours, and by his representations to the Board, of designs which I believe never existed, having got into his hands an authority to act as he pleased, in a very few days after he began the war by the attack of the city of Patna."

Mr. Vansittart took no part in the revolution. As long as he remained, he resolved to support Jaffier Khan in the government, with the same steadiness as he had Cossim; "for it was the station, and not the person," he regarded as connected with the Company's interests. He, nevertheless,

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nevertheless, apprehended that the advanced age of the Nabob, his infirmities, and a habit of indolence, would prevent his taking the necessary measures for regulating the several branches of his government.

The President then offered various suggestions, which he thought calculated to place the inland trade upon a proper footing, and pointed out remedies for preventing a recurrence of the controversies that had arisen in the Council, "which had occasioned great detriment, expense, and loss of reputation."

Defects of system which had led to these proceedings pointed out.

By a subsequent letter to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated in December, it appeared the system was such, that it was with great difficulty a friendship could be maintained with any Nabob; that our connexions in the country were so extended by the pursuit of private-trade through a number of new channels, in distant parts of the country, and the authority of our agents was so overgrown by the influence they derived from the English name, that the Nabob's fouzdars and collectors could not exercise the duties of their offices, where any English agent or gomastah, or any merchant or inhabitant of the country dealing with them, was concerned. These circumstances occasioned continual complaints from the Nabob, couched in terms similar to those which had been used by his predecessor, Meer Cossim.

On

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On the other hand, if full powers were given to the Nabob's officers, nine out of ten abused it, totally obstructing the business of the English gomastahs. Thus the two governments were continually clashing.

"It was impossible for a friendship to subsist long; upon the whole, therefore (observed Mr. Vansittart), I must give it as my opinion, that our connexions in this country are at present on a point where they cannot stand; *they are either too great or too little.*"

There was much truth in this observation. It was impossible for us to recede without abandoning the acquisitions we had already made: it was equally apparent, that we could not maintain the position we had taken without extending those acquisitions.

The same remark will be found to apply with increased force, as the causes are traced which led to the progressive enlargement of our Indian possessions, until they reached the limits, forming the natural boundaries of that vast empire, which, by a series of extraordinary events, is now subjected to the British rule.

Meer Cossim seeks refuge with Shuja Dowla.

Meer Cossim, unable to make any further stand against our troops, fled into the territories of Shuja Dowla. The Vizier, notwithstanding his profession of aid, and the expectation of the Council that he would have made Cossim prisoner, suffered him to proceed without interruption through

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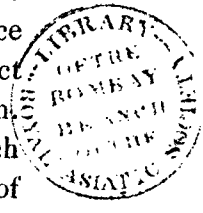
through Benares and Allahabad, to the banks of the Jumna, where the king and vizier were encamped, by whom he was favourably received. The Directors expressed their earnest desire that Mr. Vansittart, who had intimated his intention to quit the presidency, should continue until peace was established, as they reposed the most perfect confidence in his ability, discretion, and attention. They also pointed out the impressions which weighed with them in taking a favourable view of the conduct of Cossim, and of those which were adverse to Meer Jaffier, whose incapacity, cruelty, and perfidy, had been so fully experienced. "There is, besides, an obvious impropriety in setting up, pulling down, and again restoring, the same man, which cannot fail to be represented to the disadvantage of the Company."*



Shuja Dowla, being desirous of entering into an engagement with the Company, was informed that no treaty or alliance of friendship would be entered into with him, until Meer Cossim was delivered up, or brought to justice for his cruelty. The king and the vizier, manifested determined hostility towards the English. In March, they moved with considerable bodies of horse and foot to Benares, crossed the Ganges, and marched to the Caramnassa. Major Carnac, who had advanced to the banks of the Soane, not having

King and Shuja Dowla hostile to English.

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* Court's Letter to Bengal, February 1764.

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ing a sufficient force of cavalry, fell back upon Patna, to secure supplies. The enemy, encouraged by this movement, advanced from the Soane on the 3d May, and, in different bodies, attacked our army from nine in the morning till near sunset; but, finding themselves repulsed in every quarter, they drew off. On the 23d, Shuja Dowla re-crossed the Soane.

Major Munro takes the field.

A reinforcement, consisting of his Majesty's 89th regiment, arrived from Bombay in June, under Major (afterwards Sir Hector) Munro. That officer, in virtue of his rank in the King's service, became commander-in-chief of the army in Bengal. He immediately prepared to take the field. The enemy made various overtures; but none that could be relied upon; nor could the Council treat for peace without running the risk of encouraging Shuja Dowla in his hostile intentions, by giving him too high an opinion of his own strength. The government, therefore, continued to insist upon his retiring out of the limits of the provinces, and delivering up Sumroo, who was the executioner of the massacre at Patna, hoping that, by forcing him to accede to such terms, the superiority of the Company's arms would be sufficiently established, to deter the other chiefs of Hindostan from any attempt to invade our territories.

Mr. Vansittart quitted Calcutta in November 1764, being succeeded by Mr. Spencer.

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The king, Shah Alum, although he had accompanied Shuja Dowla in his expedition in May, professed his disapprobation of the measure. When the Nabob, Meer Jaffier, came down to Calcutta, in the month of September, he had with him Shatab Roy, who was formerly employed in negotiations between the Council and the king, then the Shazada. Shatab Roy brought letters from the king and Shuja Dowla, expressive of a desire to enter into a friendly negotiation. The Council felt that no reliance was to be placed on the sincerity of the vizier, who entirely ruled the king; they therefore determined that Major Munro should pursue the most vigorous measures, and attack the enemy the first opportunity.

Overtures from the king and vizier rejected.

It must here be remarked, in justice to Munro, that the army, which he found in a state of mutiny on his arrival in June, had, by his determined and vigilant conduct, been brought back to a comparative state of discipline; but not until a battalion of sepoys, who had marched off with their arms, were secured, twenty-seven of whom were tried by a court-martial and executed, according to their sentence, the battalion being broke with infamy.*

After

* This mutinous spirit was traced to the revolt which had occurred on the 11th February, and had been occasioned by the erroneous impression that there was an intention of stopping the donation promised by the Nabob. It was attributed to a body of Frenchmen, consisting of 150, who had entered the Company's army.

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After great exertions, the army crossed the Ganges above the Soane, and took post on the bank of that river, from whence it marched towards the enemy, who remained with their whole force at Buxar. A general engagement took place on the 23d of October. Our troops gained a most complete and decisive victory. Six thousand of the enemy were left dead on the field of battle, one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon being captured.

Vizier defeated and flees to Allahabad.

Shuja Dowla fled towards Allahabad. The king and Beny Bahadre, the principal officer of Shuja Dowla, were at Benares; they made overtures to know what terms would be accepted. They were informed, "the delivery of Sumroo, and the retention by us of the country as far as Benares, to defray the charge of the war." This cession was required, to convince all the native powers of the success of our arms in a war unjustly commenced against us, more than for any revenue which it might yield. "We do not," observed the Council, "wish to extend our connexions beyond what may appear necessary for securing the future tranquillity of these provinces, which is the first object of our consideration."

Terms offered to Shuja Dowla rejected by him.

The proffered terms were rejected by Shuja Dowla.

The king joins Major Munro's army.

The king, who had been kept in a state of bondage by the vizier, being once more master of his actions, joined the army under Major Munro, who

who entered upon a negotiation, according to instructions from the Council at Calcutta, with his Majesty, as to the charge of the war and the cession of the country as far as Benares, which was to have been made by the vizier Shuja Dowla. A phirmaund was executed by the king, on the 29th December 1764, assigning the country of Ghazeepore and the rest of the zemindarry of Rajah Bulwunt Sing, the Company engaging to put the king in possession of Allahabad and the rest of the countries belonging to the Nizamut of Shuja Dowla.* Munro proceeded towards Allahabad, but failed in reducing that fortress through the ill-conduct of the sepoys, who were seized with a sudden panic, and fell back at the assault. 1764. BENGAL. Treaty with the king, Shah Alum.

The vizier attempted to get into his rear, for the purpose of cutting off communication with his boats and carrying off the king. The attempt was unsuccessful. Munro converted the siege into a blockade, and returned with the remainder of the troops to Benares. Operations of the vizier.

The vizier, after this movement, having advanced towards Munro, the latter withdrew the troops before Allahabad, in the hope of bringing the vizier to action. In this he was disappointed; the two armies remained nearly stationary from December till 1764 February in the following year.† During

* Printed Treaties, page 37.

† Major Munro returned, at this period, with part of his regiment to England. The President and Council, on the occasion

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During this interval, Sir Robert Fletcher succeeded to the command. An engagement shortly followed. Allahabad and Chunagur surrendered on the 11th February, when Shuja Dowla continued his retreat towards Lucknow. His affairs were in great disorder, and his people disaffected; but he made no further overtures. The Council determined to pursue their view of expelling him, and putting the king in possession of the country.

Death of Nabob Jaffier Ally Khan, and succession of Nazim-ood-Dowla.

Jaffier Ally Khan died on the 5th February, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Nazim-ood-Dowla, then only sixteen years of age. The conduct of his affairs was, at the instance of the Council at Calcutta, confided to Mahommed Reza Khan, the Nabob of Dacca, Nazim-ood-Dowla being apprized that he held the government by the influence and authority of the Company.

The views of the president, Mr. Spencer, and his Council, being directed to the establishment of the Company's authority as paramount to every other, the Nabob was discharged from maintaining any troops for the protection of the provinces, those of the Company being substituted: he was to make no application for sunnuds but through the President and Council; nor to engage any European

of his departure, strongly recommended to the Court of Directors to procure for his eminent services some special mark of his Sovereign's favour.

European in his service, and was to dismiss any who might be with him. It was observed, that as Meer Jaffier had been appointed and raised to the soubahdarry by the Company's forces, and had been supported in it by their influence alone, the Council could not allow that any right of succession or the nomination could rest with him or his family, till their acquiescence and confirmation had been obtained. The same force that was employed to raise the father, was to be called forth to support the son. "If," observed the Council, "this does not give us some right to a nomination, thrice already assumed, we know not what can." The native government had been almost subverted. Different parties adhered to a different sovereign, though all joined in oppressing the man whom the Council considered as such: and they naturally ask, "shall we, who have lost so many lives in support of privileges heretofore held by grants from Delhi, but held only by our arms, yield up our authority in Bengal, and sacrifice, at once, all we have been contending for? To admit the king's right of confirming, while we support a man by force in the Nizamut, would be the grossest absurdity. If we look, we shall find they have been forcibly obtained. The oppression and violence of the Government in 1756, forced us into a share of their affairs, very contrary to our inclination; and as we alone, whatever glossing

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1765. BENGAL. we may put upon it, support the present government in the family against the king's inclination, having been in arms against the king himself in support of it, we consider that we have as good a right to take as large a share as will answer our principal ends, 'security to our trade and possessions,' as any other people, who are as much usurpers as we: and there is no doubt we have more influence to obtain the sunnuds, if we choose, than any other people whatever."*

The king, in virtue of the treaty of December, had gone to reside at Allahabad. The Council, after taking steps to put him in possession of Shuja Dowla's country, and making such arrangements as would enable him to maintain himself without further aid, determined to withdraw to the frontier of the Company's provinces.

The war with Shuja Dowla had been one not of choice, but of necessity. It was wished to have retained him as a barrier between the Company and the other powers, even after the battle of Buxar; but, as he continued obstinate, the only alternative was to set the authority of the king against him, in order to convince the empire at large, that the Council were determined not to destroy the Mussulman power, as had been artfully insinuated. In all their proceedings, the Council "did not lose sight of the reluctance expressed by

* Secret Consultations, 20th February 1768.

by the Court of Directors to new expeditions or distant acquisitions."* 1765. BENGAL.

Shuja Dowla had retired from Lucknow, and left the province of Oude to seek refuge and aid amongst the Rohillas.

ON THE COAST OF COROMANDEL, the siege of Fort St. George by the French was raised in February 1759, by the appearance of the English fleet off Madras and the force under Major Brereton. Masulipatam was taken by Major Forde; but the attempt against the French settlement of Pondicherry was unsuccessful, and M. Lally laid siege to Trichinopoly. His progress was, however, checked by the operations of Colonel Coote, who invested and took Wandewash. M. Lally, alive to the importance of Wandewash, made every effort to recover it. A long and obstinate engagement took place, in which the French were completely defeated, General Bussy and many other officers being made prisoners by Colonel Coote, who followed up his victory by the captures of Chittaput and Arcot. 1759. MADRAS and CARNATIC.

During these operations on shore, Admiral Pocock defeated the fleet of M. D'Ache, although greatly superior in ships and guns. The engagement was extremely severe, eight of the English ships

* Vide letter from Mr. Spencer to the Court, 14th March, 1765.

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1760. MADRAS. ships having at one period withstood the fire of the whole of the French fleet, consisting of sixteen ships. The arrival of Admiral Cornish, who joined Admiral Pocock, gave the English a decided superiority in the Indian seas.

Various forts captured. The army, after the surrender of Arcot, moved towards Pondicherry, to cut off supplies, while Admiral Cornish blockaded it by sea. The district of Trincomalee was reduced by Captain Smith. On the 5th March, Permacoil surrendered to Colonel Coote, Carrical to Colonel Monson and Admiral Cornish on the 5th April, and Chellumbrum to Colonel Monson on the 12th. On the same day, Colonel Coote took Waldour, where the camp was formed previously to operations against Pondicherry; for which purpose, a large supply of gunpowder had been sent from Bengal and Bombay, accompanied by three companies of the king's artillery from the latter presidency. The Mahrattas had gained a considerable victory over Salabat Jung, who ceded to them districts of the value of sixty lacs of rupees, and the fort of Dowlatabad, at that time the strongest in the country. M. Bussy and other French prisoners on parole, at Pondicherry, were ordered to Madras, as several of them had borne arms by order of M. Lally. Considerable apprehension being entertained that the Mahrattas would enter the province and demand the *chout*, and, if joined by the Mysoreans and the French, that they would

Measures to promote the siege of Pondicherry.

would impede the designs against Pondicherry, a member of the Council was deputed, for the purpose of inducing them to refrain from advancing towards the Carnatic. In the month of September, the President, Governor Pigot, accompanied by Colonel Coote, visited Admiral Steevens on board the *Norfolk*, and, after much solicitation, obtained his consent to the marines of the squadron being landed, to aid the troops in preventing supplies being thrown into Pondicherry. During the preparation for attacking Ariancopang, orders were received from Bengal for divesting Colonel Coote of the command, and placing it in the hands of Colonel Monson. The latter officer, in an attack on the enemy's outposts, having had both the bones of his leg broken by a shot, recommended that Colonel Coote should again receive the command. It was some days, however, before Coote would consent to return to the camp, having made preparations to proceed to Bengal. The French blew up Ariancopang, and retreated to Pondicherry. The marines being re-embarked by the desire of Admiral Steevens, he sailed in October with the greater part of his fleet to Trincomalee, leaving five of his ships to prevent the enemy affording aid by sea.

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Colonel Monson wounded. Colonel Coote resumes command.

Ariancopang evacuated by the French.

The king (as he was then styled) of Mysore having supported the French, a diversion was made into his country, and the fort of Caroor taken by Captain Smith. It was supposed to have been the

1760. MADRAS. the first instance of any European troops having advanced so far west inland. The king subsequently addressed letters of friendship to the President and to the Nabob of the Carnatic, stating Hyder Naigue. that it was his prime minister, Hyder Naigue, who had rebelled against him and sent his troops to assist the French. It appears to be the first mention of Hyder, who became so formidable an enemy to the Company, both in his own person and that of his adopted successor.

1761. The President, Mr. Pigot, having received an invitation from Colonel Coote, who thought his presence might be necessary in the event of the reduction of Pondicherry, proceeded in the ship Lord Mansfield, on the 7th January, and joined the army on the 9th. On the 10th, a battery was opened against the north-west bastion of the town: on the 13th, another within five hundred yards of Pondicherry surrenders. the walls. On the 15th, deputies came to Colonel Coote, with offers to surrender the place: on the 17th, the fort and citadel were delivered up, and the English colours hoisted. The siege lasted eight months, during which the garrison suffered great distress. The Nabob had presented ten lacs of rupees to the Mahrattas, to prevent their entering Patans defeat the Mahrattas. the Carnatic during the operations. They suffered a severe defeat in a general engagement with the Patans, which checked their growing power—a power, it was observed, that would have spread through the country, "considering the

"progress

"progress they had made of late years."* In the month of February, Hyder was in open rebellion against his master, the king of Mysore. 1761. MADRAS. Hyder in rebellion against the king of Mysore.

Colonel Coote was to return to Bengal in March, Colonel Monson being sufficiently recovered to assume the command until General Lawrence arrived from England as commander-in-chief. In October, the Council stated that Salabat Jung and the other contending parties had solicited assistance, offering phirmaunds, which they declined; adding, "we are not desirous of grasping at more than can be held." Vellore surrendered to the Nabob on the 26th December.

In April, various refractory Polygars were reduced, and the Council mediated between the Nabob and the king of Mysore for a settlement of the former's demand. An expedition against Manilla sailed on the 29th July from Madras. 1762. Expedition to Manilla.

In September, the Council advised the Court of intelligence received from Bengal, as to the measures then in progress against Cossim Ally Khan, and stated: "Private advices place it to too much violence on both sides." Governor Pigot returned to England in the month of November, when Mr. Drake succeeded to the chair. 1763.

The treaty of peace with France having reached the Council, they observed, that the French could only maintain troops by obtaining grants of country, 1764. Peace with France.

* Letter from Madras, March 1761.

1763. MADRAS. try, and this they might easily do from the Nizam, as the treaty did not preclude it.

Mr. Palke succeeded, under the Court's appointment, as governor, on the 4th May.

Madura surrenders. In October, the fort of Madura, situated amidst the refractory Polygars, and against which operations had been commenced in the early part of the year, surrendered to Major Campbell.

1765. Northern Circars. The acquisition of the Northern Circars had become an object of considerable importance. The Council, apprehensive that, if the Company obtained possession, it might embroil either the Bengal government or themselves with the Mahrattas, proposed to rent them of the Nizam, in order to secure them from falling into the hands of the French, as M. Law, formerly so conspicuous a party in Bengal, had reached India under the treaty of peace, and proceeded to Pondicherry. Various disputes arose as to the rights of the French under the treaty, and the Council dwelt strongly upon the desire M. Law had manifested to acquire all the privileges which he contended the treaty secured to them.

Aid proposed to Hussain Ally in Northern Circars. The Nizam wished that assistance should be given to Hussain Ally, to whom he had granted sunnuds for the Northern Circars to enable him to reduce them to subjection. "As the Carnatic appeared to be secure, except from the junction of the Mahrattas, Nizam Ally, and Hyder, and that with some European power," which the Council

Council considered very unlikely, they agreed to assist Hussain Ally. Shortly after the troops for this purpose were in motion, intelligence was received that the Nizam had advanced in force to make demands on the Nabob. The troops were recalled to oppose him, should he advance beyond Cuddapah. In the month of March, he slowly approached the hills near Tripetty, with 4,000 horse and 10,000 sepoys; but when he ascertained the force that would be opposed to him, he retired, and sent a friendly letter to the President, with a present of an elephant. The troops accordingly proceeded, in fulfilment of the original determition, to aid Hussain Ally.

1760. BOMBAY.

SINCE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PIRATES at Gheria, by the forces under Commodore James and Colonel Clive in 1756, the Council at Bombay had been principally engaged in prosecuting the Company's commercial affairs at Gombroon, and in the Persian Gulf; also through Bussorah with Persia, and in Canara and Malabar. In February, 1760, they sent a deputation to Poonah, under an impression that the Mahrattas were treating with the French. NANNAH, the head of the Mahrattas, disavowed any such intention. He died in the month of June, 1761, when it was believed that the Brahmin interest, which had given great disgust to the people in general, would cease. Mr. Whitehill was deputed to Poonah

MAHRATTAS.

1761.

1761. BOMBAY. Poonah, to condole with Mhaderao on the death of his father, whose widow had retired to the hills, with all her family and effects. Mhaderao sought aid from the Company against the Nizam; but the Council declined to interfere, further than to preserve him from ruin, and to effect an accommodation with the Nizam.

The Bengal government were of opinion, that the state of affairs consequent upon the death of Nannah, presented a favourable moment for a general attack against the Mahratta power, as the presence of some of their bodies, on the borders of the Company's provinces in Bengal, had been productive of much expense and annoyance. The Council at Bombay pointed out that the Mahrattas on the frontiers of Bengal acted independently of those at Poonah; and although they felt the importance of reducing their power, yet, in their opinion, the period was not arrived when the attempt could be made with any prospect of success. Ragobah had taken upon himself the principal direction of the affairs at Poonah, since the death of Nannah, and there was reason to believe that he had proceeded to join the Nizam. The government determined, therefore, to avoid all interference with their affairs as much as possible.

1763. Rise of Hyder Ally. In May, 1763, HYDER ALLY, or HYDER NAIGUE,* began to attract attention. He had already

* Vide page 104

already taken Bednore and advanced into Canara. 1763.
Mangalore submitted to him, and afterwards BOMBAY.
Onore. His object was to bring the whole of the forts on the sea-coast into subjection; at the same time professing an anxious desire to keep on good terms with the Company, permitting them, under treaty of the 27th May, to erect a factory at Onore and to enjoy various privileges of trade.* He made an application to the Council for a supply of 7,000 stand of arms; they acceded only to the extent of 500 stand, apprehensive that a complete refusal might create a misunderstanding.

In March of this year, they permitted him to 1764.
purchase some cannon, and to build a fighting vessel at Bombay, under the impression that he might check the Mahrattas and other freebooters on the coast. The Mahrattas, fearing his power, abstained from any movement. The Council remarked, that Hyder promised to become a very formidable enemy, unless he should be cut off, which his enterprizing spirit rendered very probable, as his projects for extending his authority had caused him many enemies. His successes having deprived the Mahrattas of the *chout* in part of the Bednore country, they attacked him, and gained advantages over him in various engagements. He applied to the Nizam, and also to the Council at Bombay, for succour. The latter declined taking any

* Printed Treaties, page 518.

1764. BOMBAY. any part, unless satisfied that their interference was essential to promote the Company's interests.

In November, Hyder was so pressed by the Mahrattas, then within five miles of his camp, that he applied for aid to the Company's agent at Tellicherry, expressing, at the same time, his intention of making the whole of the Malabar powers tributary. The chief at Tellicherry expostulated with him against such an attempt, representing that, the Company being on terms of friendship with most of the native powers on the coast, they could not remain neuter, unless he guaranteed full security for the Company's interests. In December, he made application, through the agent at Onore, for aid, both for himself and the Nizam, in troops, stores, and guns, agreeing to defray every charge, and to grant the Company all the pepper trade on the coast. The Council, feeling it equally important to avoid giving umbrage to the Mahrattas, and to prevent their subduing the Bednore and Soondah countries, resolved to supply Hyder with four hundred stand of arms and one hundred barrels of gunpowder. The Directors disapproved of the disposition manifested to support Hyder, and remarked, that a man of his aspiring genius, supposing him to continue for any time, is more likely to become a formidable enemy than a friend.

Letter to Bombay 22 March 1765. Notwithstanding all these striking circumstances, you have added to your mismanagement by supplying him with arms

arms, buying cannon for him, and allowing him to build ships at Bombay. 1765. BOMBAY.

These transactions render it extremely necessary that we should be informed of the history of Hyder Naigue, or Hyder Ally Cawn, in which your advices hitherto have been very deficient; you are, therefore, hereby directed to send us, by the first conveyances, an account of his rise, what particular countries he possesses, by what means he is become so powerful, his genius and character, and every other material circumstance necessary for our information.

In the foregoing part of this letter, we forbad your supplying any of the country powers with muskets, which we again, and positively, direct be strictly adhered to, unless to the king of Travancore, for the reasons there mentioned.

Cannon we absolutely forbid you supplying any one of the country powers with; and should not have thought there ever would have been a necessity for this, it appearing so remarkably inconsistent with our interest and policy.

We also positively forbid your supplying the country powers with any other warlike stores whatsoever, or by whatever name they are distinguished (the king of Travancore excepted, as observed in other parts of this letter); and we do the same with respect to all kinds of marine stores, unless upon very extraordinary occasions, and for which we shall expect you to give us, in the fullest and most explicit manner, your reasons for the necessity of any compliance.

With regard to building ships at Bombay for any of these people, it can never be for our interest, whatever it may for individuals, and, consequently, we positively forbid its being done in future.

In January, an expedition was undertaken for the purpose of subduing the Malwan pirates, when the Malwan pirates.

1765. BOMBAY. the fort of Raree, in the Southern Concan, was captured.

Hyder pressed by Mahrattas. The Mahrattas having driven Hyder to great extremities, the Council at Bombay felt that the whole of the Company's privileges on the coast might fall a sacrifice, in the event of their further progress. The resident accordingly addressed a letter to Mhaderao and Ragobah, pointing out the privileges granted by Hyder to the Company, and stating that they could not sit down tame spectators, and see him deprived of the means of continuing them. It was proposed that the Council should use their best offices to mediate between them and Hyder. The proposition was accepted, and terms were agreed to,* which ended in a peace, leaving Hyder in possession of the provinces of Bednore and Soondah.

Hyder extends his conquests. This arrangement had scarcely been concluded, when Hyder effected the reduction of the greater part of the country on the coast. He then directed his course towards Calicut, which having captured, he entered the Colastria dominions with 30,000 men, under the pretence of collecting two lacs of pagodas, stated to be due to the Bednore government, and attempted to pass the king of Cotiote's country. The spirit of aggrandizement which he manifested, led the Council to direct their agent at Onore to withhold from him all further supply of

* The 25th April 1765.

of fire-arms. In May, the Council were apprised that the king of Travancore had applied for aid to the Dutch, in case Hyder should invade his territory; but that his chief reliance was on the Company, to whom he was prepared to transfer the 3,000 candies of pepper, at the same price at which it was taken at by the Dutch, provided the Company would supply him with warlike stores, and defend his kingdom, he defraying the expense of such aid. 1766. BOMBAY.

The depredations of Hyder were extensive and indiscriminate. At Rhandeterra, the Moors struck and destroyed the English colours, which were flying there. Ally Rajah appearing to be active in these operations, a detachment was sent against him. Hyder disavowed all intention of acting hostilely towards the Company: his declaration appeared deserving of credit, from the fact that, at the moment of his operations against the several petty native states, he sent his only ship of war to Bombay, to refit, which it was not likely he would have done, had he been in a state of hostility with the English. The Council took measures for opposing him, in the event of his attacking the Company's property; and, in the month of April, advised the Madras Presidency of the whole of their proceedings and future intentions, requesting them to co-operate, should circumstances lead to a rupture.

The Council at Madras were anxious that every means Council at Madras de-

1766. BOMBAY. Desirous to maintain peace with Hyder.

means should be adopted to avert a collision with Hyder. They were apprehensive, if hostilities took place, that the whole of the country would be involved; and as he had the command of all the passes leading into the Nabob's country, he might, with ease, send his cavalry forward, and do great mischief, before effectual measures could be taken against him. They likewise considered that he presented an important check to the power of the Mahrattas.* Another reason which induced them to urge the maintenance of a good understanding was, the grant to the Company of the circars by the Mogul. Nizam Ally was indisposed to admit the Company's authority; and, should he join with Hyder, the Council felt that it would present a serious obstacle to the Company's establishing their power in those countries.

In consequence of these representations, the President at Bombay addressed a letter to Hyder, on the 11th July, adverting to the friendship and regard which he professed for the Company, and pointing out how totally inconsistent his whole course of conduct was with such a feeling. In order to place his relations towards the Company on a clear footing, the President transmitted fourteen articles, as the basis for a treaty of peace and firm friendship to be agreed to by him. The first declared, that "there shall be peace and friendship

* Consultations, June 1766.

friendship for ever;"—the second, that the said Nabob has lately conquered the sea-coast from Cape Ramo north, to Penany south, &c.; the Nabob to repay the Company what was owing to them by the Rajahs of the countries of which he had taken possession; facilities of trade to be secured; pepper to be supplied; and provision made that he should not form a treaty with any European power, contrary to the interests of the Company; nor was he to attack any power in alliance with them, more particularly the Nabob of Arcot. He was to send a list of articles he wished to be supplied with. 1766. BOMBAY.

The answer from Hyder was dated the 28th September, and received on the 9th November at Bombay. The articles were completely altered by him; the first commencing, "*Thanks be to God, I have subdued the coast of Malabar from the Cape of Ramo to Penany.* Since there is so firm a friendship between the Honourable Company and this state, how can my people join with the Honourable Company's enemies? As there is a fair friendship between the Honourable Company and this Circar, they shall always receive more compliments than others." The thirteenth article provided that, whenever the Honourable Company might want troops, he would furnish them with ten or fifteen thousand; and, on the contrary, they were to furnish him, when his enemies rendered it necessary. He was to have

1766. BOMBAY. annually, from the Company, a supply of three or four thousand muskets.

The following is an extract from Hyder's letter to the President:—"I have received your honour's esteemed letter; thanks be to God, there is no separation or difference between your honour, the Honourable Company, and the Circar, and it is my desire that our friendships may be firm, and increase daily more and more. Mahomed Ally Cawn, of Arcot, has also an intention, through the persuasion of low people, to have some disputes with me: but I also take no notice of it, out of regard to your honour. Ally Rajah, although a well-wisher of your Honourable Company, the Nairs preserve a great enmity with, and consequently inform the chief of Tellicherry many things against him, which unjustly occasion him to be disgusted with him. I have also, in consequence of your letter, sent the articles I am in want of, and desire your honour will order it to be drawn out accordingly, and sent to me under your seal. I am now in want of the muskets, and, therefore, desire your honour will order to permit me annually to purchase from the Honourable Company three or four thousand new English muskets, and what gunpowder I may want. I am very glad to observe the offer made me of the Honourable Company's assistance, which is consistent with our friendship."

Character of Hyder. The Council at Bombay, in accordance with the desire

desire expressed by the Court of Directors, sent home an account of the rise, connexions, and situation of Hyder. This paper appears to have been mislaid. Colonel Wilks, in his 'Historical Sketches of the South of India,' gives an account of Hyder, of whom he speaks in the following terms: 1766. BOMBAY.

"An unknown volunteer in this obscure service (the reduction of Bangalore to the house of Mysore) was destined in after-times to become the head of a mighty empire; to establish a reputation in arms, which, fairly viewing the scene on which he moved, and the instruments he was able to employ, has seldom been exceeded, and to threaten, with no ideal terrors, the extinction of the British power in India."

This statement accords with a paper in the possession of the late Colonel Mackenzie, the surveyor-general of Bengal, which represented Hyder to have been the son of Futty Naik, a soldier in the service of the Nabob of Sirpy, in the year 1728, who fell at the same time with his master in an action with a Patan chief, named Rei Mohomed, sent by Nizam ul Mulk, then soubhadar of the Deccan, against the Nabob. Hyder Naik was then about ten years old. He became a party in the hostilities which arose out of the contentions in 1750 for the Nabobship of the Carnatic, where he commanded a considerable body of troops raised through his own means.

In

1766. BOMBAY. In 1754 he appears to have been engaged against the Poligars near Trichinopoly, and for his services received a considerable present from the rajah. In 1760 he recovered Bangalore from a Mahratta force which blockaded it, in the expectation that it might be added to the possessions already acquired by them in the country of Mysore.

CHAPTER IV.

1765.
BENGAL.

THE state of affairs in India, as announced to the Home Authorities at the commencement of 1764, led to the appointment of Lord Clive* as president and commander-in-chief, which measure was communicated to the Council of Bengal in the following terms:—"The General Court of Proprietors having, on account of the critical situation of the Company's affairs in Bengal, requested Lord Clive to take upon him the station of president, and the command of the Company's military forces there, his Lordship has been appointed president and governor accordingly, as mentioned in the preceding part of this letter. The intention of the General Court, in desiring Lord Clive to go to Bengal, was, that by his Lordship's character and influence, peace and tranquillity might be the easier restored and established in that subahship. In order, therefore, to answer these purposes in a manner that we apprehend may prove most effectual, we have thought proper to

Lord Clive appointed president and commander-in-chief.

* Colonel Clive had been raised to the peerage in March 1762, by the title of Lord Clive, Baron of Plassey, in Ireland.

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to appoint a committee on this occasion, consisting of his Lordship, Mr. W. B. Sumner, Brigadier-general Carnac, also Messrs. Harry Verelst and Francis Sykes, to whom we do hereby give full powers to pursue whatever means they shall judge most proper to attain those desirable ends; but, however, in all cases where it can be done conveniently, the Council at large is to be consulted by the said Committee, though the power of determining is to be in that Committee alone. We further direct, that, as soon as peace and tranquillity are restored and established in the subahship of Bengal, then the said extraordinary powers are immediately to cease, and the said Committee be dissolved."*

The proceedings which led to the nomination of Lord Clive as president and commander-in-chief, in 1764, are calculated to throw light upon points that gave to his Lordship's character an appearance of pertinacity, which the facts will tend in a great measure to explain. Considerable misapprehension also appears to have existed as to the conduct and motives of the Courts of Directors and Proprietors at that time.

In the early part of January 1764, the Court of Directors had resolved to remove Mr. Amyatt and others from the Company's service, in consequence of the unjustifiable course they had pursued towards the

* Letter from the Court of Directors to Bengal, the 1st June 1764.

the Nabob, in the conduct of the internal trade.* They had also appointed Mr. Vansittart president and governor, and Mr. Spencer, who was the seventh in council at Bombay, second member of the council at Calcutta, and successor to Mr. Vansittart. On the 4th February, nearly three weeks subsequent to those appointments, advices were received by the *Lapwing* from Madras, dated 3d September, 1763, which conveyed the first intelligence of an actual rupture with Meer Cossim, the death of Mr. Amyatt at Moorshedabad, and the failure of Mr. Ellis in his attempt to gain possession of the city of Patna. The latter gentleman would have been removed from the service, by the Court's orders of May 1763, which orders had not been received in Bengal when the above-mentioned occurrence took place. 1765. BENGAL.

The attention of the Proprietors and the public was drawn to those advices, their substance being stated in an anonymous advertisement, issued on the 8th February, and published in the papers by order of the Chairman. A special General Court was called on the 27th February, at the requisition of nine proprietors, for the purpose of considering the state of affairs in India. They met again on the 29th February, and on the 1st and 12th March. At these several Courts, all the proceedings touching the various revolutions in India, down

* Vide p. 87.

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down to the last elevation of Meer Jaffier, including the despatch of the 3d September, were read. It was then moved, to refer back the appointment of Mr. Spencer for the reconsideration of the Court of Directors: but the General Court adjourned without coming to any decision on the question. On the 12th March, another Special Court was held, at the requisition of nine proprietors, at which it was resolved, "that it is the desire of the General Court, that Lord Clive be requested to take upon him the station of president of Bengal, and the command of the Company's military forces there."

His Lordship, who was present, intimated, "that if the Court of Directors were as well disposed towards him as he was towards them, he should have no objection to the service; but till he found such a disposition, he desired to be excused from coming to any resolution." A letter was addressed to Lord Clive from the Court of Directors, on the 16th March, transmitting a copy of the General Court's resolution, and acquainting him that they were *unanimous* in assuring him, that they would most cheerfully concur in taking the steps necessary to carry the resolution of the General Court into effect, and in preparing every convenience for his passage. His Lordship's reply to the official communication, through the Secretary, was dated the 17th. "I have received your letter enclosing a copy of the resolution of the

the last General Court. I must desire you will return the Directors my thanks, for their offers of preparing every convenience for my passage." 1765. BENGAL.

The letters were communicated to a General Court on the 21st March, when the Proprietors desired to know from Lord Clive, who was present, whether he was disposed to declare his immediate acceptance of the stations. His Lordship replied, that "he would give his answer as soon as the next election of Directors should be determined." A motion was then made, "that, Lord Clive declining to accept immediately the service proposed to him by the General Court, the Court of Directors be desired to make the proper arrangements, in the present critical situation of the Company's affairs." After a debate thereon, it appeared to be the sense of the Court, that every objection Lord Clive might have to his acceptance of the Company's service should be removed. His Lordship having declared that "he could not accept the service if the Deputy Chairman remained in the lead of the Direction," that gentleman repeatedly expressed the greatest inclination to co-operate, in the most honourable and friendly manner. Lord Clive then signified that he would declare his final resolution in a few days, which he was desirous of being indulged with. On the 28th March, his Lordship addressed the following letter to the Court of Directors:—

"Gentlemen:—It was agreed at the last General

1765 BENGAL. ral Court of Proprietors, that I should have a few days to consider and determine concerning the terms upon which I would accept of the request of the preceding Court of Proprietors, to take upon me the direction of their affairs in Bengal.

"Although I thought I had sufficiently explained myself on that head at the time the proposal was made, yet, as there seemed to be a disposition in many of the gentlemen of the Court for whom I have the highest respect, that a reconciliation should take place between Mr. Sulivan and me, so that this gentleman might still conduct the affairs at home, and that I might nevertheless venture, without fear of my reputation, abroad, I thought the respect which was due to those Proprietors, the duty I owe to myself, and the regard I shall ever feel for the interest of the Company, all called upon me, in the strongest manner, once more to revolve in my mind the possibility of such an union, consistent with the services I would endeavour to render the Company, and consistent with that attention which is due to my own honour.

"This I have endeavoured to do in the coolest and most dispassionate manner, after laying aside every prejudice, and judging only from the constant experience of things.

"Upon the whole, I still continue to be of opinion, that, in case the Proprietors think it for their advantage that Mr. Sulivan should remain at

at the head of the Direction (or, as he was pleased to term it himself, should continue him in the lead of their affairs), I cannot accept their service: but in case the Proprietors should not think it necessary to continue Mr. Sulivan in such authority, I am willing and ready to accept their service, even supposing the next advices should pronounce their affairs in Bengal to be in as desperate a condition as ever they were in the time of Suraja Dowla. 1765. BENGAL.

"Should a Direction be settled with whom I can *possibly* co-operate, every thing will be easily adjusted, since I have no interested views in going abroad.

"At the same time, I never desired, or even wished, to name a Direction, as some industriously spread abroad; I only object to one man having the lead in the Company's affairs, in whom I have so often and publicly declared I never can place any confidence, and who, in my opinion, has acted, and does continue to act, upon principles diametrically opposite to the true interest of the East-India Company.

"I have the honour to be, with great respect, gentlemen, your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed) "CLIVE."

"Berkeley Square,
March 28th, 1764."

No answer was returned to his Lordship's letter. The annual election took place on the 12th April;

1765. BENGAL. April; new Chairs being chosen on the 13th, Mr. Sulivan returned into the body of the Court. On the 18th, a letter was addressed to Lord Clive from the Court, through their Secretary, desiring his Lordship to signify his determination as to proceeding to India, and that he would favour the Chairs with a conference on the following morning. In consequence of such communication, Lord Clive repaired to the India House on the 19th, and being desirous of explaining himself to the Court, he was introduced. After acknowledging that he felt bound in honour to accept the invitation of the General Court, he declared that he had no interested views therein, but that his sole object was that of serving the Company. He expressed his sentiments generally as to the political, commercial, and military affairs of the Company, he stated that he could not proceed if Mr. Spencer continued in Bengal, as such measure would be the occasion of several of the Council resigning the service; and that he also apprehended there would be great impropriety in his proceeding to India whilst the law-suit relating to his jaghire was depending.

On the 27th, his Lordship having stated that he should be ready to take upon himself the government, although his offer as to the jaghire should not be agreed to; addressed the Court at considerable length, submitting various suggestions, which he conceived would tend to promote the Company's

Company's interests. The Court of Directors on that day rescinded the nomination of Mr. Spencer as second in council, and re-appointed him to Bombay. 1765. BENGAL.

On the 30th April, Lord Clive was sworn in as president of Fort William and commander-in-chief of the Company's forces there. On the 5th May, the General Court resolved to grant to his Lordship the proceeds of the jaghire for ten years; it was also resolved that covenants should be entered into by the Company's servants not to receive gifts, presents, or rewards in India. The orders prohibiting presents, and desiring covenants to be entered into, were opened and recorded by the Council at Calcutta, on the 24th January 1765. Jaffier Ally Khan died on the 5th February following, when Nazim-ood-Dowlah, the Nabob from whom the members of the Council were charged, on Lord Clive's arrival, with having received the present of twenty lacs, succeeded to the musnud.

The Committee of Correspondence having been appointed to confer with Lord Clive on the various suggestions he had made, and to report their opinions to the Court, the Committee, on the 25th May 1764, recommended, "that, in order to restore peace and tranquillity in Bengal, full powers be given to our president and governor Lord Clive, Mr. Sumner, General Carnac, Messrs. Verelst and Sykes, to pursue whatever means they

1765. BENGAL. they judge most proper to attain the same; but that, when it can be done conveniently, they are to consult the Council at large. However, when those desirable objects are obtained, the said extraordinary powers are immediately to cease."

The Court of Directors adopted the recommendation of the Committee on the same day, and, as already shewn, it formed part of the instructions to the President and Council at Calcutta.

Such were the facts connected with Lord Clive's appointment. It has however been stated that, "during the military and political transactions which so intensely engaged their servants in India, the Courts of Directors and Proprietors remained for several years rather quiet spectators and warm expectants, than keen and troublesome controllers.

"When they had been agitated for a while, however, by the reports of mismanagement which were mutually transmitted to them by Vansittart and his opponents, and, at last, when they were alarmed by the news of a war actually kindled with the Nabob, of the massacre of so many of their servants, and the extensive spirit of mutiny among the troops, their sense of danger roused them to some acts of authority. Though Clive had quitted India with an act of insult towards his employers, which they had highly resented; though the Directors had disputed and withheld payment

payment of the proceeds of his jaghire, for which he had commenced a suit against them in the Court of Chancery; he was now proposed for governor, as the only man capable of retrieving their disordered and desperate affairs. Only thirteen Directors, however, were found, after a violent contest, to vote for his appointment, while it was still opposed by eleven. Yet the high powers which he demanded, as indispensable for the arduous services necessary to be performed, though strongly opposed, were also finally conferred. He was invested with the powers of commander-in-chief, president, and governor, in Bengal, and together with four gentlemen, named by the Directors, was to form a Select Committee, empowered to act by their own authority, as often as they deemed it expedient, without consulting the Council or being subject to its control." 1765. BENGAL.

With regard to the first clause of the passage, the Company's records shew, that both the Courts of Directors and Proprietors watched with much solicitude the progress of affairs in India. There is nothing which authorizes the inference, that they were at that period "warm expectants," (it is presumed) either of new acquisitions or exorbitant gains. They desired the means of meeting the heavy expenditure which the operations in that country had entailed upon the Company. They advised and directed, where advice and direction could be safely given; and although they

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they wisely abstained "from controlling any measures which the exigency of circumstances might have called for on the part of the Council, they communicated their sentiments and wishes thereon to their servants."

Indeed, the principles which governed the Court at that early period of the Company's political history, present an extraordinary coincidence with those expressed by the Court, only in the month of January 1835:—

"Long experience, as well as reflection, has convinced the Court of Directors, that, under the very imperfect knowledge which can here be attained of all the circumstances connected with, and bearing upon, public arrangements and operations of the government in India, there are few cases in which precise and peremptory rules ought to be prescribed. The course which they have followed, as the only safe and salutary one, has been, to be copious and minute in instructions and observations, both as regards the principles to be acted upon, and the application to be made of them in particular circumstances: but to be very sparing in orders and rules, which leave not a latitude to those on the spot, who alone are competent to frame their measures in such a manner as to adapt them to circumstances which here may have been only partially known."

So far from the Court having been aroused to acts of authority by the news of actual hostilities

ties with the Nabob—by the massacre of so many of their servants—and by the extensive spirit of mutiny among the troops, it has been seen that they had exercised those acts of authority before any such news had reached England. That the death of Mr. Amyatt was not known to the Court until three weeks after he had been removed from the service; the account of the massacre did not arrive until three months, and that of the mutiny until six months, after the appointment of Lord Clive; and instead of its having been considered an extensive mutiny, the Court of Directors, on the 11th October, 1764, caused the following notice to be issued through the daily papers: "We can with good authority assure the public, that although, by the last advices from Bengal (7th February), the East-India Company were informed there had been a mutiny among the troops, instigated and encouraged by some French soldiers, about one hundred and fifty in number, who had enlisted in the Company's service, yet the same, at the time of despatching those advices, was quelled, without the loss or desertion of a single European, except those Frenchmen above-mentioned." The appointment of Lord Clive was that of the Court of Proprietors, and not of the Court of Directors. With regard to the high powers stated to have been "demanded," it would be inferred from the statement that they formed one of the stipulations under which his

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1765. BENGAL. Lordship accepted the office of president; whereas he was sworn in on the 30th April, and it was not until the 25th May that the recommendation of the Committee of Correspondence already noticed, which was agreed to in personal communication with, and not in consequence of any demand from his Lordship, was adopted by the majority of the Court. It was on that occasion that the eleven Directors dissented not from his appointment but from the resolution conferring such powers on the Select Committee, which was to consist of four members besides his Lordship; and so far from the act conferring such powers being unusual, the principle had obtained, of appointing a Select Committee to act irrespective of the Council, since February, 1756.

In the instance of the expedition to Madras under Colonel Forde, in 1758, the Select Committee acted under such powers, as appears by the Consultations of the 21st August in that year. In the instance of Mr. Vansittart, in February 1764, only three months preceding the proposition for conferring the powers in question on Lord Clive and the Committee, full powers had been given by the Court to Mr. Vansittart "with authority to pursue whatever means he judged most proper to attain the object. He was in all cases, where it could be done conveniently, to consult the Council at large, or at least the Select Committee, though the power of determining was *to be in him alone!*"

Lord

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Lord Clive arrived at Calcutta, and took his seat as President, on the 3d May. One of the first measures of the Select Committee was the suppression of the internal trade, which had been the cause of such serious and frequent disputes. In accordance with the opinion of the Select Committee, an order was issued in Council, on the 20th May, requiring all European agents employed in the different parts of the country to repair to the presidency by the 1st August. The attention of the Council was also drawn by the President to a representation from the Nabob, that, since his father's death, a distribution had been made of twenty lacs by Mahommed Reza Khan, for the purpose of maintaining him in his station, and that members of the Council had participated in the gifts. Mr. Leycester, one of the members of the Council, recorded a minute explanatory of the course he had followed. On the 7th June, the subject of receiving presents from the country government and its officers, contrary to the orders from home, and to the covenants required to be entered into by the servants of the Company, being brought under discussion by the proceedings of the Select Committee, Mr. Johnstone, a member of the Council, desired that the question, "whether the acceptance of all presents is improper?" might be put to each member of the Board. Of the eight members present, including the President, four gave a decided or qualified opinion in favour of receiving presents;

Presents accepted by members of Council.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

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presents; and four, including the President, were opposed to their receipt.*

The

* Extract Bengal Consultations, 7th June, 1765:—

Mr. BURDETT is of opinion, "That such presents may be received or not, according to particular circumstances; that the Nabob had a right to dispose of his own property, and that the presents, on the occasion in question, might with great propriety be received."

Mr. LEYCESTER: "That where they are not the price of services, they may very properly be received."

Mr. SYKES: "That presents at all times from the Nabob or his officers are very improper, as tending to the prejudice of the Company's interests."

Mr. JOHNSTONE: "That where they are not the price of unworthy services, and no trust is betrayed for them, the acceptance of them is no way improper; and, in the present case, as being previous to the execution [*but not the receipt of the orders**] of the deed of covenant, as warrantable as in time past by any who had received them."

Mr. VERELST is of opinion, "That the receiving of presents, at a time the Board are doing their duty in supporting the government, and in the interest of the Company, is highly improper; and the more so in the present instance, since he is informed that the Company's orders and covenants were received in Calcutta before the tender of them."

Mr. PLEYDELL agrees in the opinion given by Mr. Leycester.

Mr. SUMNER is of opinion, "That the acceptance of presents after the receipt of the Company's orders to the contrary, and the covenants, is very improper."

The PRESIDENT: "That no presents whatever ought to have been accepted after the receipt of the covenants, except in the manner specified therein."

Mr. LEYCESTER recorded, on the 11th June, a minute, of which the following is an extract. It is a singular document, and presents a curious specimen of reasoning in support of his views:—

"When

* *Vide* page 127.

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The following extract from a minute recorded by Mr. Johnstone in Council, on the 17th June, evinces a strong party spirit, as well as a jealous feeling towards Lord Clive and the Select Committee, and affords some clue to the reasons which doubtless operated on the mind of his Lordship, in pressing for the removal of Mr. Spencer from Council.*

"It seems the aim of the (Select) Committee to render the proceedings of the late President and Council, if possible, obnoxious, instead of striving to promote the cordiality so much to be wished. To

"When the Company's interests were altogether secured, and the orders of the Board fully executed, it is very true that I accepted a present from the Nabob. I never made a secret of it, as the custom of this country on such occasions, well known to every body, *sanctifies* the acceptance; and where presents have not been esteemed the price of improper services, I never heard a reflection cast on those who did receive them. It has always been my opinion, that, in a country not under the most absolute tyranny, every man's property was at his own disposal, and every one was at liberty to accept what was offered without fear or compulsion, the same not being a consideration for improper services. The adopting opposite maxims is contrary to the known practice of those who have gone before us; and though absolute orders, with a penalty annexed, may make the receiving presents improper and inconvenient, yet they cannot alter the rectitude of the act itself; and I will venture to appeal to the common sentiments of mankind, which, I am persuaded, will condemn that man as a very absurd one, who, having an opportunity of obtaining a comfortable maintenance for no dishonourable sacrifice, should decline the occasion."

* *Vide* page 126.

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To what causes must we attribute this temper of the Committee? One would almost think they were piqued to find the interest of the Company so well secured before their arrival; only they must know that their coming at all was doubtful, and the gentlemen who had felt the defects of the former treaty, were full as well qualified to remedy them in the new one, and have no doubt their masters will approve their services. I have heard that the Governor has expressed much chagrin, that the affair of his jaghire has been settled according to his agreement with the Company without his interposition, though a better opportunity could not have occurred to get it done. Mr. Spencer, than whose merit none stands in a fairer light with the Company, was, if I may so call him, *the darling of that party which in England opposed Lord Clive and the gentlemen of the Committee.* Any attack of him or his measure, is an attack on the party who espoused him; and though I would not assert that any such sentiments influenced any member of the Board, yet I cannot help being surprised at the uncommon neglect and disregard shewn to Mr. Spencer by Lord Clive."

Lord Clive recorded a minute on the 24th June, as to the jaghire, which had been so broadly adverted to by Mr. Johnstone. His Lordship did not shrink from boldly maintaining what he conceived to be his just rights, from the earliest moment the point became matter of dispute until the

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the final settlement of the question:—"As to the recrimination of my having formerly received a present from Meer Jaffier, which Mr. Johnstone would establish as a precedent to be followed by every body, he is not ignorant that it was given to me in a military capacity only, as a reward for real services rendered to the Nabob at a very dangerous crisis; nor was that reward ever stipulated, required, or expected by me, or with my knowledge. Be it also remembered, that what I received in consequence of the battle of Plassey, was the only present I ever did receive, although I remained, during the space of nearly three years afterwards, President of the Council, and at the head of a victorious army. Let the impartial world determine, whether those who have succeeded me with inferior pretensions, and even in inferior stations, have conducted themselves with equal propriety or moderation. It is unnecessary for me to dwell longer upon the subject of my own conduct, having long ago published every particular relating to it, and having long ago had the satisfaction of seeing it approved by my employers. If all Mr. Johnstone's transactions will bear the test as well as mine, he will no doubt receive as honourable testimonials of public approbation as I did. The gentleman has heard, it seems, that I expressed some chagrin in finding that the confirmation of the jaghire to the Company on the expiration of ten years, or at my death, had been obtained (attempted,

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tempted, I suppose he would have said, for it is not yet obtained) without my interposition. As this part of Mr. Johnstone's minute happens to be a fact, I will do him the justice to acknowledge it. I have not scrupled to say, and I still continue of opinion, that the late President and Council were officious in applying for the confirmation. The Court of Directors, in their letter of the 1st June last, expressly say, that they need give no other directions relative to that business, than that the Council shall co-operate with me in effecting it; and that, in case of my death, then the President and Council for the time being shall solicit for, and use their best endeavours to obtain, the grant, in as effectual a manner as if I had been living to co-operate with them. These being the orders, the only orders, they received, and the opportunity they so much dwell on being of no importance, I cannot help repeating, that the application which the gentlemen thought fit to make to the Nabob was officious, and strongly intimated either a distrust of my intentions to complete the agreement I had entered into, or an inclination to deprive me of that small testimony of my attachment to the Company."

Necessity for powers of Select Committee.

Nothing could more strongly prove the necessity for his Lordship being armed with the powers that had been conferred upon him and the other members of the Select Committee, than the proceedings which have been so fully noticed. A reference to

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to the documents is essential, in order to place the facts before the reader, and to enable him to form a correct opinion as to the conduct of Lord Clive, in the various peculiar and difficult positions in which he was placed.*

On the receipt of Mr. Leycester's minute, and the other proceedings, the Court wrote as follows: "In the thirtieth paragraph of our letter of the 19th February last, we expressed our surprise that the covenants were not executed, nor any notice taken of them; judge, then, what we feel on learning, from Mr. Leycester's minute on Consultation, 11th June, 1765, that they never were intended to be executed; and we presume he speaks not only his own sentiments, but the sentiments of his colleagues, when he says, the covenants were rather the effects of party than the cool sentiments of his masters, and that it was probable parties would unite in abolishing covenants that could only injure individuals, and do the

* Before the Directors had received intelligence of the proceedings in Council, and the minute of Mr. Leycester, they wrote to Bengal, on the 19th February, 1766:—"We cannot avoid taking notice, that the late President and Council neither acknowledged the receipt of the covenants relative to the receiving presents from the country government, nor have they taken the least notice of them. We hope there is no further meaning in this neglect than the deferring it till Lord Clive's arrival; yet, when we consider the total disregard of our most solemn orders on the most important subjects, we know not where their disobedience will stop."

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the Company no service. If our servants presume thus to call in question our most direct and positive orders, enforced, too, by the general voice of the whole body of Proprietors, it is time for us to exert the authority vested in us, and to do justice to the injured natives, to our own honour, and to the national character.

"The proceedings of the Select Committee have laid open to us a most complicated scene of corruption.

"Neither can we admit, that the vast sums obtained on this occasion were by any means free gifts; the dependent situation of the Soubah is itself a refutation of the plea; and his letter to Lord Clive and the Select Committee, with the concurrent testimonies of the Seats, and Mahmud Reza Cawn, together with the depositions of the several people examined in this matter, amount to the clearest proofs that they were exacted from the several parties as the terms of the protection granted them; and, lastly, we shall say a word or two to what those gentlemen vainly imagine makes strong in their defence, that no interest was sacrificed to obtain them.

"The Company was engaged in a war which, as far as we can judge, cost them from ten to twelve lacs per month, for which the Nabob had stipulated to pay no more than five lacs per month, and even that fell in arrears; the Nabob was at this time pressed for payment of the remaining thirty

thirty lacs for restitution, besides other unlawful demands on him. It cannot surely be pleaded that, under these circumstances of the Soubah and the Company, no interest of the Company was sacrificed to obtain them! We think these gentlemen sacrificed their own honour, the interest and honour of the Company, and of the nation. 1765. BENGAL.

"We are sorry to see some of the gentlemen have thought fit to justify their breach of trust by a breach of order, in pleading the covenants were not executed, therefore not obligatory. But so totally do we differ from them, that we think them not only guilty of a breach of those particular covenants, but also of the general covenants, which were entered into before these last were found so necessary.

"The cavils and opposition of several of the members of the Council to the powers and conduct of our Select Committee, appear most evidently to have been calculated to screen and obstruct the inquiries into and detection of their misbehaviour; but we are satisfied you have had the real interest of the Company constantly in your view, in all your researches into the general corruption and rapacity of our servants, with the spirit and disinterestedness which do you honour, and merit our approbation." *

Ten

* Letter to Bengal, 17th May, 1766.

1765. BENGAL. Ten servants, including Mr. Spencer, were dismissed the Company's service.

Shuja Dowla, having found means to engage Mulhar, a considerable Mahratta chief, in his alliance, made formidable preparations to penetrate a second time * into the Nabob's dominions. The measures pursued by Brigadier-general Carnac, who had assumed the command of the army, prevented a junction of the numerous forces destined for the invasion, and averted the consequences of a ruinous war, which must have been supported through another campaign. Having reason to believe that their intention was to fall upon Sir Robert Fletcher, who commanded a separate corps in the Corah district, the general by forced marches united his troops with those of Sir Robert, and, on the 3d May, coming up with the enemy, completely defeated them. The Mahrattas retired with precipitation towards the Jumna, where they took up a position, whence they intended, if possible, to re-enter the district of Corah. The general attacked them again on the 22d, and obliged them to retire to the hills.

Shuja Dowla defeated.

Surrenders to the British Government.

The Vizier, Shuja Dowla, having intimated a desire to throw himself upon the generosity of the British Government, was received with the respect which was considered due to his rank.

It

* *Vide* page 93.

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Lord Clive proceeds up the country and concludes a treaty with the Vizier and Nabob.

It appeared to the Council, that a peace with the Vizier was the immediate object to be attained. Lord Clive accordingly quitted Calcutta on the 24th June, to conclude a treaty; for which purpose, his Lordship was furnished by the Council with the following instructions:—"Experience having shewn, that an influence maintained by force of arrms is destructive of that commercial spirit which we ought to promote, ruinous to the Company, and oppressive to the country, we earnestly recommend to your Lordship, that you will exert your utmost endeavours to conciliate the affections of the country powers, *to remove any jealousy they may entertain of our unbounded ambition, and to convince them we aim not at conquest and dominion,* but security in carrying on a free trade, equally beneficial to them and to us. With this view, policy requires that our demands be moderate and equitable, and that we avoid every appearance of an inclination to enlarge our territorial possessions. The sacrifice of conquests, which we must hold on a very precarious tenure, and at an expense more than equivalent to their revenues, is of little consequence to us; yet will such restitutions impress them with a high opinion of our generosity and justice. For these reasons, we think Shuja Dowla should be reinstated in the full possession of all his dominions, with such limitations only as he must see are evidently calculated for our mutual benefit. We would decline in

1765. BENGAL. insisting upon any terms that must prove irksome to his high spirit, and imply a suspicion of his sincerity. Retaining possession of any of his strongholds may possibly be deemed a necessary pledge of his fidelity. For our parts, we would rather consider it as the source of future contention and an unnecessary burthen to the Company, unless it be one day proposed to resume the thought of extending their dominions: a measure very opposite to the sentiments in which we left the Court of Directors."

In accordance with these instructions, his Lordship and General Carnac concluded a treaty of peace with Shuja Dowla and the Nabob, on the 16th August, at Allahabad.* Whatever reasonable expectations the Council entertained that this treaty would secure their friendship and fidelity, and render the public tranquillity permanent, it was the commencement of a connexion which has been a fruitful source of discussion to the present day.

The Nabob was extremely averse to the establishment of factories in his dominions, as he justly considered, from past experience, that they would lay the foundation of a future rupture, and prove the only thing that could possibly disturb our amity. The word *factories* was omitted in the treaty; but without relinquishing the right, should it be found expedient, after mature deliberation,

* *Vide* Printed Treaties.

ration, to enforce it, the Council stated that they could foresee no benefit to arise to the Company from maintaining settlements at so vast a distance from the presidency, whatever advantages might accrue to their servants. The prospect was so remote, while the expenses were so certain, the risk so evident, and the disputes it might occasion so probable, that they were of opinion the factory lately established at Benares ought immediately to be withdrawn. They considered the limits of the Nabob's dominions sufficient to answer all purposes, and that they ought to constitute the boundaries, not only of all the Company's territories, possessions, and influence, but of their commerce also. "Grasping at more would endanger the safety of the revenues, and the well-founded power which they enjoyed, without the hope of obtaining an adequate advantage." 1765. BENGAL.

A sufficient provision was secured for the support of the king's honour and dignity, without danger of his becoming a future incumbrance. Twenty-six lacs yearly were granted to him on the revenues of Bengal, an income far more considerable than he ever before enjoyed. The Select Committee then announced, that, "in gratitude for this instance of our attention to his interest, his majesty has been pleased to bestow on the Company the most important grants ever yet obtained by any European state from the Mogul Court.

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Besides confirming to the Company all their former possessions, and securing to them the reversion in perpetuity of Lord Clive's jaghire, he has conferred on them the DEWANNY OF BENGAL, BAHAR, AND ORISSA, and, ratified in the strongest terms an agreement we proposed concluding with the Nabob, if the king's consent could be procured."* Another article stipulated that Shuja Dowla should pay the Company fifty lacs of rupees, by way of indemnification for the charges incurred by the war. The surrender of Cossim, Sumroo, and the deserters, was utterly out of his power. The former had sought shelter in the Rohillah country, and the latter under the protection of the Jauts. It was agreed that they should never meet encouragement or assistance from Shuja Dowla, or be again admitted into his country. A sanguine hope was entertained that the treaty of peace would be lasting, and our frontiers in that quarter perfectly secure against foreign invasions.

DEWANNY granted to the Company.

The Select Committee then observed: "The time now approaches, when we may be able to determine, with some degree of certainty, whether our remaining as merchants, subjected to the jurisdiction, encroachments, and insults of the country government, or the supporting your privileges and possessions by the sword, are likely to

* Letter from the Select Committee, 30th September, 1765.

to prove most beneficial to the Company. Whatever may be the consequence, certain it is that, after having once begun and proceeded to such lengths, we have been forced to go on from step to step, until your whole possessions were put to the risk by every revolution effected and every battle fought. To apply a remedy to those evils, by giving stability and permanency to your government, is now, and has been, the constant object of the serious attention of your Select Committee." 1765. BENGAL.

These remarks justly point out a state of things flowing from the progress of events so self-evident, that they require no comment. It has been charged upon Lord Clive, that he had planned or contemplated the acquisition of the Dewanny when at Madras, on his passage out. It should not be forgotten that the Dewanny of Bengal had been offered to the Company in 1761.* His lordship denied the justice of the charge. But so far from attaching any thing like criminality to the idea, had it been entertained by Lord Clive, it must have been clear to any one who had watched the course of things, that it was the most likely measure to prevent a recurrence of those disputes and disagreements with the Nabob, which had so frequently occurred and had been so strongly condemned. The Select Committee themselves Beneficial results anticipated.

* *Vide* page 47.

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selves seem to have felt such to be the case, in writing to the Court:

"The perpetual struggles for superiority between the nabobs and your agents, together with the recent proofs before us of notorious and avowed corruption, have rendered us unanimously of opinion, after the most mature deliberation, that no other method could be suggested of laying the axe to the root of all these evils, than that of obtaining the Dewanny of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa for the Company. By establishing the power of the Great Mogul, we have likewise established his rights; and his majesty, from principles of gratitude, equity, and policy, has thought proper to bestow this important employment on the Company, the nature of which is, the collecting all the revenues, and after defraying the expenses of the army, and allowing a sufficient fund for the support of the Nizamut, to remit the remainder to Delhi, or wherever the king shall reside or direct."

Court's views on acquiring the Dewanny.

The Directors expressed their sentiments on this event in the following terms:* "We come now to consider the great and important affair of the Dewanny. When we consider that the barrier of the country government was entirely broke down, and every Englishman throughout the country armed with an authority that owned no superior, and exercising his power to the oppression

* Letter to Bengal, 17th May, 1766.

sion of the helpless native, who knew not whom to obey, at such a crisis, we cannot hesitate to approve your obtaining the Dewanny for the Company. 1765. BENGAL.

" We must now turn our attention to render our acquisitions as permanent as human wisdom can make them. This permanency, we apprehend, can be found only in the simplicity of the execution. We observe the account you give of the office and power of the king's Dewan in former times was—the collecting of all the revenues, and after defraying the expenses of the army, and allowing a sufficient fund for the support of the Nizamut, to remit the remainder to Delhi. This description of it is not the office we wish to execute ; the experience we have already had, in the province of Burdwan, convinces us how unfit an Englishman is to conduct the collection of the revenues, and follow the subtle native through all his arts to conceal the real value of his country, to perplex and to elude the payments. We therefore entirely approve of your preserving the ancient form of government, in the upholding the dignity of the Soubah.

" We conceive the office of Dewan should be exercised only in superintending the collection and disposal of the revenues, which office, though vested in the Company, should officially be executed by our resident at the durbar, under the control of the Governor and Select Committee, the

1765. BENGAL. the ordinary bounds of which control should extend to nothing beyond the superintending the collection of the revenues and the receiving the money from the Nabob's treasury to that of the Dewannah, or the Company.

"The resident at the durbar, being constantly on the spot, cannot be long a stranger to any abuses in the government, and is always armed with power to remedy them. It will be his duty to stand between the administration and the encroachments always to be apprehended from the agents of the Company's servants, which must first be known to him; and we rely on his fidelity to the Company to check all such encroachments, and to prevent the oppression of the natives. We would have his correspondence to be carried on with the Select Committee through the channel of the president. He should keep a diary of all his transactions. His correspondence with the natives must be publicly conducted; copies of all his letters sent and received be transmitted monthly to the presidency, with duplicates and triplicates, to be transmitted home, in our general packet, by every ship." This was the introduction of the system of recorded check, which has since prevailed in conducting the home administration of the India government.

Opposition to Lord Clive. After Lord Clive had returned to the presidency, various questions arose, which involved a great difference of opinion, and a spirit of opposition

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tion was evinced towards his Lordship, which rendered it absolutely necessary either that he should adopt strong and decided measures for maintaining the authority with which he was invested, or at once relinquish the government.

The latter course would have left the interests of the Company to parties who had evinced a contempt for all authority, and a determination to promote their own interests at any cost. His Lordship stated that the series of excesses which he had pointed out were not confined to the civil service, but the thirst after riches was daily promoting the ruin of the army. He dwelt upon the encroachment of the military upon the civil jurisdiction, and their attempt to be independent of the civil authority, and observed, "the whole army should be subordinate to the civil power, and it is the indispensable duty of the Governor and Council to keep them so. If at any time they should struggle for superiority, the Governor and Council must strenuously exert themselves, ever mindful that they are the trustees for the Company in this settlement, and the guardians of public property under a civil institution."

His Lordship's views.

After touching upon various other points connected with the state of the public affairs in India, his Lordship adverted to his contemplated return to England in the ensuing year.

"Calcutta, 30th September, 1765:—Permit me now to remind you, that I have a large family who

His intended return to England.

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who stand in need of a father's protection; that I sacrifice my health, and hazard my fortune, with my life, by continuing in this climate. The first great purposes of my appointment are perfectly answered; peace is restored, and my engagement to procure for the Company the reversion of my jaghire is completed in the fullest manner, since it is not only confirmed by the present Nabob, but by the Great Mogul. I now only wait to be informed whether my conduct thus far be approved of, and whether the whole or any part of the regulations I have had the honour to lay before you are conformable to your ideas of the reformation necessary to be established. If they meet with your approbation, I doubt not you will immediately empower me, in conjunction with the Select Committee, to finish the business so successfully begun, which may easily be effected before the end of the ensuing year, when I am determined to return to Europe, and hope to acquaint you, in person, with the accomplishment of every wish you can form for the prosperity of your affairs in Bengal." In May, 1766, the Court of Directors sent an overland despatch, on learning the intention of Lord Clive to quit India, and requested his continuance in the government: "The stability of your Lordship's plan," they observed, "with respect to our possessions and revenues, the peace of the country, and effecting a thorough reformation in the excessive abuses and

Requested by the Court to remain.

and negligence of our servants, require time, care, and ability to accomplish; we cannot, therefore, but be under great concern at the notice your Lordship has given us of your intention to leave Bengal the end of this year. But as the interest of the Company depends upon your Lordship's perfecting what you have laid so good a foundation for, it is our earnest and unanimous request, that you will continue another season in Bengal; the doing which will further add to the honour and reputation your Lordship has already most deservedly acquired, and will lay a lasting obligation upon the Company. This request is of so much consequence, that we have thought it necessary to send it overland, to be forwarded to Bengal by way of Bussorah, as it may probably come to your hand before the arrival of the *Mercury* packet, which we are using our endeavours to get away in about a fortnight; by which we shall send our sentiments, observations, and directions, upon the several advices received by the *Admiral Steevens*, as fully as so short a time will admit of."

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The Select Committee being of opinion, that opening a communication between the Northern Circars and Bengal would prove mutually advantageous to the presidencies of Fort St. George and Bengal, they determined to embrace the favourable opportunity, which the feeble condition of the Mahrattas afforded, to carry the measure into execution; for which purpose they "set on

Northern Circars.

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on foot a negociation with their chief," proposing that he should cede to the Company the northern parts of Orissa, now in his possession, upon our paying a certain stipulated annual revenue. But whatever his determination might be, it was resolved not to attempt gaining the advantage by violence or force of arms.

Political relations.

The political relations of the Government appeared to be in a satisfactory state. Shuja Dowla was disposed to cultivate our friendship, and adhere strictly to the conditions of the late treaty. Colonel Smith's brigade was stationed at Allahabad and Benares, to secure the king and vizier against the invasions of the Mahrattas, until they had fully re-established themselves, and completed the payment of the stipulated indemnification to the Company. The king's visionary projects, of seating himself, with the Company's assistance, on the throne of his ancestors, and proceeding to Delhi, his capital, appeared "to have vanished" before the Select Committee's remonstrances; and they hoped that he was at length convinced that, without our aid, the scheme was impracticable. On this point, it was remarked, in the letter to the Court, "we are certain it never can be your interest to extend the influence of your arms to so great a distance from your present possessions and the seat of your government."*

Peace

* Letter from Bengal, dated 31st January 1766.

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Peace being happily restored to the provinces, the Select Committee stated, "it would be their study to preserve and prolong those advantages which had already begun to be experienced."

Servants called from Madras.

To supply the places of two members of the Council who had resigned, of one who had been suspended, and of three who had evinced a total unfitness for the station, and in consideration of the extreme youth of most of the other servants, the Select Committee determined to call in the assistance of four meritorious servants from Madras, until the pleasure of the Court of Directors should be known.† The proceeding occasioned great dissatisfaction amongst the Bengal servants, and led to an association against the proceedings of the committee, and an agreement not to visit or accept invitations from the Governor. "However puerile, it is the fact," observed his Lordship. The same spirit prevailed against all but one member of the Select Committee. The secretary to the Council, being at the head of the association, was suspended.

After entering into these details, and pointing out the remedies which his Lordship considered essential to be introduced in the general system of the service, he stated it to be his intention, so soon as the ships were despatched, and the gentlemen who were expected from Madras should have

* The Court of Directors approved and confirmed this step.

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have arrived, to proceed up the country, for the purpose of supervising in person the Company's affairs.

Lord Clive proceeds up the country.

Lord Clive, accompanied by General Carnac, accordingly, left the presidency at the close of March.

On the 8th April, his Lordship addressed a letter to the Council, dated at Moostejeyl, stating that, as the receipt of a legacy did not appear to be prohibited by the new covenants, he had received from the Begum, wife of the late Nabob Meer Jaffier, an obligation for the sum of five lacs of rupees, which was bequeathed to him by the Nabob, a few hours before his death, in the presence of many witnesses, whose attestations would be forwarded, to be laid before the Board. His Lordship added, that he should immediately pay the amount into the Company's treasury, to form

Formation of Lord Clive's fund.

a fund, the interest of which to be applied by way of pension to officers, non-commissioned officers, and private men, disqualified by wounds, or disease, or length of service, from further duty, and likewise to their widows who might be left in distressed circumstances.

The Council were unanimously of opinion, that the receipt of the legacy was in no way prohibited by the new covenants, and expressed the lively sense they entertained of his Lordship's "generous and well-placed donation."

This act of generosity, for so it was termed by the

the Court of Directors as well as by the Council abroad, has not escaped severe animadversion. Although the legacy was left by Meer Jaffier to Lord Clive during his Lordship's passage to India, in February, 1765, it has been alleged, that it was the act of Jaffier's son, Nujeem-ool-Dowla, and that it not only partook of the character of a present, but was another instance of the acquisitions of Lord Clive, which came "subsequently" to view, and had, it may therefore be supposed, been previously and purposely concealed. 1766. BENGAL.

The despatch from Bengal, announcing the donation, was received by the Court on the 19th June, 1767. Doubts having arisen whether, under the covenants, his Lordship could legally accept the bequest, the subject was brought under the consideration of the law-officers of the Company and the Crown, by some of whom it was maintained, that his Lordship had a clear and legal right to it. To put all doubts at rest, the Court of Directors, on the 2d August, 1767, unanimously resolved, "that his Lordship be empowered to accept of the said legacy or donation, and they do highly approve of his Lordship's generosity in bestowing the said legacy of five lacs in so useful a charity; and they hereby consent and agree to accept of the trust of the said fund, and will give directions that the same be carried into execution in legal and proper form." 1767.

On

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On the 6th April, 1770, the Committee of the Military Fund was appointed, to carry into effect a deed of agreement between his Lordship and the Company. The sum given by Lord Clive was £62,833, to which the successor of Meer Jaffier added £37,700, together with the further sum of £24,128, being the interest from the Company, at eight per cent., on the cash notes granted on the two first-mentioned sums.

It is stated, "to this *ambiguous* transaction the institution at Poplar owes its foundation." The institution at Poplar was founded by the old East-India Company, in 1627, under the designation of "POPLAR HOSPITAL," for the purpose of relieving persons who had been employed in their *Maritime Service*. The regulations by which it was governed were revised in 1681, 1768, and 1813.

Poplar Hospital and Lord Clive's Fund are separate institutions, the former having existed one hundred and twenty-seven years before Lord Clive's Fund was formed, and the sources from whence each derives its pecuniary means of support being quite distinct.

Double batta reduced.

The order of the Court of Directors for the reduction of double batta had been carried into effect in January.* Representations against that measure,

* *General Letter to Bengal, the 9th March,* 1763:—The reduction of your military expenses, and particularly of your field-allowances, was, and is still, an object most worthy of your serious

measure, couched in moderate terms, were sent in from the subalterns, and a memorial was presented from the officers of the first brigade to the Council. There was no apparent irritation on the part of the officers, and there was every reason to conclude that the army would remain satisfied until the whole subject had been brought before the Court of Directors for their re-consideration. The Council remarked that, conscious of the necessity

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serious attention. The extraordinary allowance of double batta is what we cannot pass over without some animadversions thereon.

"The allowance of double batta is not only entirely new to us, but no reasons are given why of late it should be deemed more necessary than it was heretofore. We must observe, that your compliance therewith is founded on an estimate which appears to us of a very extraordinary nature, with regard to the great number of servants said to be necessary in the field; to the alleged dearness of provisions, which we have reason to believe is greater on the coast of Coromandel than in Bengal; and also to the unprecedented expense for wearing apparel." Again,

Military Letter to Bengal, the 1st June, 1764:—"We gave you our sentiments so fully upon the exorbitant military expenses at your presidency in our letter of the 9th March, 1763, that we have now only most positively to enforce the orders therein given, for your taking every opportunity to reduce them within the most frugal bounds the general good of the service will admit of. But with respect to the double batta, however, we as positively order, that immediately upon the receipt hereof, half of it be struck off, that is to say, all our military are to have single batta only, in the same manner as is allowed at our presidency of Fort St. George, and even this single batta we most earnestly recommend it to you to reduce whenever circumstances will admit of it."

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cessity which existed for a reduction of the military expenses, they were determined to see the orders strictly obeyed; at the same time, "until the charges incurred on account of servants, horses, and the necessary equipage of the field in the climate of India, were diminished by some regulation, the allowance of a subaltern would scarcely maintain him in the station of a gentleman."

Military combination.

During Lord Clive's stay at Moorshedabad, he received, on the 29th April, intelligence that a general combination had taken place among all ranks of the army under the degree of a field officer, with a determination to distress the Government by throwing up their commissions on a given day.

Lord Clive's measures in subduing it.

His Lordship resolved to proceed at once to Monghir, where the first battalion lay in cantonments. He wrote to the Council, recommending that all should be put to risk rather than suffer the authority of Government to be insulted; and that he felt the saving of the half batta to be quite a secondary consideration, when compared with the danger to be apprehended from yielding to the menaces of so mutinous an association.

One hundred and thirty officers had already subscribed to the association, and engaged to raise a fund, not only for the maintenance and support of those who should suffer, but also to enable them to purchase commissions in the king's service in England.

An

An army making its own terms was so alarming a circumstance, that the Council fully concurred in his Lordship's views, and resolved by every means to crush such a mutinous spirit in its birth at all hazards. Orders were given to accept all the resignations which might be sent in, and the parties who tendered them were to be sent down to Calcutta within twenty-four hours. 1766. BENGAL.

Intelligence was shortly after received that the officers of the 2d and 3d brigades intended to resign on the 1st June. The firmness of the Council was not to be shaken; they resolved to persevere in enforcing the orders, and requisitions were immediately despatched to Madras and Bombay for troops. The field officers and men remained firm. Reinforcements having arrived, reflection succeeded to folly and madness, the officers began to see the absurdity of their conduct in its true light; "jealousy and reproach took place in their councils—individuals separated themselves from the cause—and the offenders almost to a man submissively acknowledged their error, and prayed to be re-admitted to the service."

It appeared that the combination had, in point of fact, commenced in January, and at a time when the disaffection amongst the civilians was at its height, many of whom, there was every reason to believe, had joined in instigating the revolt.

From subsequent inquiry, it was found that Lieutenant-colonel Sir Robert Fletcher himself had

1766. BENGAL. had promoted the association; he was accordingly placed in arrest and ordered to be tried by a court-martial, by whose sentence he was cashiered, and was sent by the Government to England in November.

Congress at Chupra. During Lord Clive's residence in Bahar, a congress was held at Chupra, at which his Lordship, General Carnac, Shuja Dowla, and the king's minister, assisted. The foundation was there laid for a proposed treaty between the Company, the vizier, and the Jaut and Rohilla chiefs, for their mutual defence and security against all attempts of the Mahrattas to invade their several dominions. His Lordship and General Carnac, from a consideration of the little advantage the Company could derive from such distant allies, left the matter to be arranged by Shuja Dowla, with an understanding that he was not to conclude anything, nor enter into any absolute engagements, "without having previously acquainted the President with every proposal, and obtained his approbation."*

Shuja Dowla was represented to have fully discharged all the engagements he had entered into by treaty with the Company.

Deputies from the Mahratta chiefs had also attended at Chupra, with others. It appeared that the Mahratta forces were assembled at the requisition

* Letter, Select Committee, 8th September, 1766.

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requisition of the king, and upon the positive assurance which he gave, that an English army would join them for the purpose of escorting him to Delhi. The king had attempted by every artifice and persuasion, to succeed in his favourite scheme of proceeding to Delhi, which the Council were satisfied would terminate "in his own ruin, and in destroying the peace of the whole empire."

In order to watch the movements of the Mahrattas, troops were stationed on the frontiers to cover the Bahar provinces.

Lord Clive returns to the Presidency.

Lord Clive and General Carnac returned to Calcutta the 30th July, on which occasion, the Council addressed a latter to his Lordship, expressive of their satisfaction at the success which had attended his measures, offering him their congratulations "on the happy issue of that prudence and firmness, which had been so vigorously exerted in reducing the military servants to discipline and to obedience."*

The Nabob Nujeem-ool-Dowla died in May, and, leaving no issue, was succeeded by his brother, Syoof-ool-Dowla: a circumstance, it was observed, which, "had it occurred formerly, might have produced important consequences in the provinces, but at that time exhibited merely the change of persons in the Nizamut."

The

* Consultations, 30th July.

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The Council, being informed, by advices from Madras, that all the differences with Nizam Ally were likely to be removed, contemplated a plan of operations with the presidencies of Fort St. George and Bombay, which would effectually prevent their being molested in future by the Mahrattas, by obliging that power to confine their whole attention to the preservation of their own possessions. The Council observed: "At present, they are the only power who can excite disturbances in Bengal; nor have we any thing further to apprehend, than a mere temporary interruption to our collections from them: hence, with our well-disciplined and numerous army, we may bid defiance to the most powerful force of the country that can be assembled in the field."

Contemplated measures against the Mahrattas.

Lord Clive's health obliges him to return to Europe.

The Council advised the Court, in a despatch of the 28th November, that Lord Clive's health had for some time past prevented his attending to public business, and that he had retired to Baraset, in the hope that a change of air would effect his speedy recovery.

On the 12th December, his Lordship acknowledged the receipt of the Court's despatches of May, expressing their desire that he should continue in the government:

"I have had the honour to receive your letters of the 2d and 17th May, earnestly requesting my continuance in the government another year. My family concerns and parliamentary interests, important

portant as they are, should not make me hesitate to comply with a request which does me so much honour, if the situation of your affairs demanded my longer service, or if the reasons which suggested to you the desire of my remaining here were actually now existing. The very weak condition, however, to which a severe bilious disorder has reduced me, requires my immediate return to Europe. It is now a month since I have been in so deplorable a state of health, as to be wholly unable to attend to business; and it is past a doubt, that I cannot survive the malignity of this climate another year. Thus, useless as I am become to the Company, and without the least prospect of recovery in Bengal, I cannot doubt you will concur with me in the opinion, of the absolute necessity of returning to my native country. 1766. BENGAL.

"The faithful view which I will now lay before you of the situation of your affairs will, moreover, convince you, that the consequences, of which you are apprehensive after my departure, cannot in all human probability happen, and that every material object of my expedition is fully accomplished."

His Lordship then stated, that a Committee of Inspection had been appointed, for examining into every department, and for carrying into effect regulations for the general conduct of affairs. General state of affairs.

The spirit of opposition and extravagance had been subdued—a dangerous mutiny effectually quelled, and an example made of the ringleaders

—stability

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—stability had been given to the army by new articles of service—the conduct of the Council towards Shuja Dowla, in restoring him all his dominions, after he had been reduced by conquest to the very lowest ebb of fortune—the regular payment to the king of the tribute, which had never been paid to former Moguls, excepting in the plentitude of power and authority—the payment of the *chout* to the Mahrattas, and the influence which the invariable success of our arms had produced—all combined to place the interests and power of the Company on a firm and advantageous basis, and, at the same time, to convince the native states "that our ambition extends not beyond the maintenance of our present possessions, and that one of our first principles of government is justice."

Such being the true state of the case, "to what purpose should I continue longer in a climate, which would certainly prove fatal to me at the end of another year? I could not leave your concerns in better hands, nor on a more prosperous footing; and you may be assured, I shall at all times be equally ready, in England as in India, to give every instance of my zeal for the Company's interests, in gratitude to a service whence I derive my fortune and my honours."

Inland trade.

The unwarrantable and licentious manner in which the inland trade had been carried on by the Company's servants, led the Court of Directors to issue

issue positive orders, in February, 1764, that from their receipt in India, a final and effectual end should be put to the inland trade in salt, betel-nut, and tobacco, and in all other articles whatsoever, produced and consumed in the country. The receipt of these orders were acknowledged by the Council in their letter of the 27th September, in which they stated that the Nabob had been prevailed upon to come down to Calcutta, for the purpose, among other points, of framing regulations for the inland trade. 1766. BENGAL.

The Directors in their general letter to the Council,* stated, that they had such entire confidence in Lord Clive's great ability and good intentions, that they had no doubt he would be able to carry into effect measures for correcting the system of private trade. They addressed a letter to Lord Clive personally,† in which they trusted that the state of affairs would admit of his attention being immediately directed to the regulation of the trade in salt, betel-nut, and tobacco, so as to prevent the confusion and oppression that had sprung from the abuses practised in late years; intimating, at the same time, that his Lordship might depend upon the Court's support. The plan proposed by the Select Committee consisted of an exclusive company, composed of the three first classes of the covenanted servants, in whom was

Abolition of the exclusive Company.

* February, 1765. † April, 1765.

1766. BENGAL. was to be vested the right of trading in salt, betel-nut, and tobacco, upon paying a certain duty. The management was committed to Mr. Sumner, and it was observed: "If the plan, therefore, should prove so fortunate as to meet the Court's approbation, the merit was chiefly due to that gentleman, who spared no pains to acquire a thorough insight into the subject; at the same time that he discharged the duties of the presidency during Lord Clive's absence."

The Court disapproved of the plan, and observed: "Much has been urged by our servants at different times in favour of the right to this trade, which we have always treated as a most absurd claim. The words of the phirmaund are: 'Whatever goods the English Company shall bring, or carry, &c., are duty free.' To suppose that the court of Delhi could mean by these words a monopoly of the necessaries of life over their own subjects, is such an absurdity, that we shall not lose time or words in trying to refute it.

"With respect to the Company, it is neither consistent with their honour nor their dignity to promote such an exclusive trade, as it is now more immediately our interest and duty to protect and cherish the inhabitants, and to give them no occasion to look on every Englishman as their national enemy, a sentiment we think such a monopoly would necessarily suggest. We cannot, therefore, approve the plan you have sent us, for trading in salt,

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salt, betel-nut, and tobacco, or admit of this trade in any shape whatever, and do hereby confirm our former orders for its entire abolition.

Court's desire to guard the interests of the natives.

"And here we must enjoin you to have particular regard and attention to the good of the natives, whose interest and welfare are now become our primary care; and we earnestly recommend it to you, that you take the most effectual methods to prevent these great necessaries of life from being monopolized by the rich and great amongst themselves, and, by that means, the poor and indigent becoming liable to those grievances and exactions, which we mean to prevent our own people from being guilty of."

The Council, on the Court's orders, offered the following observations:—

Abolition of inland trade in salt, betel-nut, and tobacco.

"We now come to speak of your instructions relative to the *inland trade*, which you very justly consider as the foundation of all the bloodshed, massacres, and confusion, which have happened of late years in Bengal. Your orders are positive, and, therefore, our obedience shall be implicit. Accordingly, you will observe in our proceedings, that the *society* for conducting this branch of traffic *stands absolutely abolished on the 1st day of September next.* The contract for the present year being formed, and large advances made, it was impossible, without ruin to individuals and confusion to the public, to fix an earlier date for the execution of your orders.

"But

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"But, although our duty obliges us to pay the strictest obedience to your peremptory orders for abolishing a trade to which you express so strong an aversion, the same duty requires we should freely offer our sentiments upon a subject, in which we think your immediate interest, the good of the service, and the public welfare, are deeply concerned. The Honourable Court of Directors, and, indeed, the whole body of Proprietors, found it necessary to restrain, by covenants, their civil and military servants from receiving those advantages to which they had for many years been accustomed. It is likewise proposed, in order that you may enjoy the real fruits of your late acquisitions, to make such an increase of investment, particularly in silk, as will effectually deprive your servants of the usual benefits arising from private trade. Farther, that the revenues may not be injured in any degree, they are prohibited from lending money at a higher interest than twelve per cent. per annum; and a trade by sea, in the manufactures of the country, being the only remaining channel for the exertion of industry, that, likewise, is choked up by those shoals of free-merchants annually imported; who, being encumbered with no public business, nor confined to residence in Bengal, can carry on a free trade with every port in India, to much greater advantage than your servants.

"Taking all these circumstances into consideration;

deration; reflecting also upon the great increase of luxury in late years, in consequence of the sudden influx of wealth, and that it will not be practicable, for a time, to reduce the charges of living to the present means of supporting those charges; we adopted, in consequence of your mission, the plan of a regulated and restricted inland trade, as the best method of rewarding faithful services, the surest means to excite zeal, and the fairest mode of carrying on a beneficial trade, without relinquishing all the advantages we have hitherto received, or subjecting the natives to those encroachments on their natural rights, of which they have with too much reason complained. 1766. BENGAL.

"Our letter by the *Camden*, and proceedings by the *Cruttenden*, will explain to you the regulations in the original plan of the society, which took place in the month of September last. Under these regulations, the trade can scarce be considered in the odious light of a monopoly, since we are rather the agents for manufacturing the salt, than the proprietors of the trade. It is sold in Calcutta to the natives only, and to the utter exclusion of all Europeans, at an easier rate than it could ever be produced when under the management of the Government, before we were admitted to any participation. The natives transport it to all the different parts of the country, under such limitations, that it must reach the hands of the consumer

1766. BENGAL. consumer at a stated and moderate price. Hereby, the people sensibly feel the justice and lenity of our government; and your servants, who have attained the highest stations, after a course of many years spent in this unfavourable climate, reap the reward of their services, and enjoy the means of securing that independence to which they have so equitable a claim.

"We are now directed totally to renounce all share in, and benefit arising from, this trade. It must be made over to the natives. The government must, of course, come into possession; nor can it be carried on otherwise than upon the ancient footing of farming it out to ministers, officers, favourities, and dependents on the government, who will rear immense fortunes upon the oppression and ruin of the public, in despite of our utmost influence and endeavours. These are at present our suspicions: time alone can verify our conjectures. You, no doubt, will maturely consider how far it is probable men will continue honest against all the seductions of private interest; and whether it may not be necessary to strengthen the ties of that duty expected from your servants, by the lighter bonds of gratitude for the affluence which they enjoy during the time of their servitude, and the independency they ought to secure before the close of their labours."

Court of Directors hope Lord Clive will remain.

The Court of Directors, anticipating the possibility of his Lordship's being enabled to continue in

in the government, addressed him, on the 4th March, 1767, on the general receipts of the Presidency. 1767. BENGAL.

"Without the great receipts from the Dewannee, the Company must have been very considerable sufferers this year, by being disappointed of a great part of the investment. Most of the money collected, as well as the sums borrowed, were, we observe, applied towards carrying on the war, and there remained no resources, but such as the wealth of our servants might afford in return for bills on us, which we could not conveniently have paid, had the sum been very large. The amount of the expenses for 1765 so far surpasses every idea we had conceived of it, that we are amazed, but hope your Lordship will be able to reduce them within the compass you have flattered yourself.

"Firmly persuaded, as we are, that every step beyond the Caramnassa, except in a defensive war, will lead to the irretrievable ruin of our affairs, it is with great pleasure we observe your strong opposition to every measure that tends to the marching our troops with the King to Delhi.

"We are much pleased to see that the obtaining the execution of the treaty from Shuja Dowla is one of the objects of your Lordship's and General Carnac's expedition to the northward. We are anxious to have this measure effected, that the brigade at Illiabad may be recalled, and the powers

1767. powers of Indostan convinced we have no further
BENGAL. object than to maintain the tranquillity of the Bengal provinces.

"We read with extreme regret your Lordship's intentions to leave Bengal the ensuing season; the more so, as an infirm state of health, and the disagreeable circumstances that have attended your administration, are the occasions of it. We do not wonder that the difficulties you had to encounter, from the interested opposition of almost the whole body of our servants, should have impaired your health; but we observe with pleasure, your public-spirited measures meet with no further opposition from the Council, since the Madras gentlemen have taken their seats at the Board.* We hope this will relieve your Lordship from your extreme application, and promote your recovery. We assure ourselves, too, it will be some pleasure to you to see that your conduct has had our approbation and firmest support. We can add nothing that will more strongly shew the sense we entertain of it and of your services, than to repeat our earnest request that you will continue another year in the government, to perfect the plan your Lordship has so judiciously formed, and prosecuted with so much zeal and spirit. Your Lordship will excuse our pressing this point so earnestly, when we assure you how essential we deem it to the permanency

* *Vide* page 155.

permanency of our affairs. We need not point out how much yet remains to attain that end. The military seem hardly yet reconciled to that system of economy, without which it is plain no revenue could suffice for the growing expenses of the army." His Lordship's health, however, did not permit of his extending his period of service in India. 1767. BENGAL.

He quitted Bengal in the *Britannia*, on the 29th January, 1767. The Council announced his departure in the following terms: "Lord Clive has found his health so much impaired by his late severe indisposition, that he is under the necessity of returning to England by the first opportunity, and takes his passage on board the *Britannia*. We cannot but regard it as a very happy circumstance, that, at such a juncture, your affairs here have been restored to so favourable a situation, by the plan which his Lordship had adopted, and had pursued with so much steadiness and perseverance." General Carnac returned on board the same ship to England. Lord Clive quits India.

On the 17th July, 1767, Lord Clive was introduced to the Court of Directors, when the Chairman, in the name of the Court, expressed their most sincere and hearty congratulations to him on his arrival in his native country, after having exceeded the Court's most sanguine expectations, not only in the very eminent services he had rendered the Company, by his wise and judicious administration Arrives in England. Receives the expression of the Court's grateful sense of his eminent services.

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administration of their affairs, during his residence in Bengal, but also by that most prudent and well-formed plan he had digested for the regulation of the conduct of the Select Committee; and that it was impossible by force of words to represent to his Lordship the high sense of gratitude the Court entertained for the constant attention given by his Lordship to the Company's interests.

On the 23d September, the General Court, in consideration of the important services rendered to the Company by Lord Clive, recommended to, and authorized, the Court of Directors to make a grant, under the Company's seal, to his lordship, and his personal representatives, of a further term of ten years on his jaghire. The indenture granting the same was approved and engrossed in October following.

Mr. Verelst succeeded Lord Clive in the government.

The Council, in their despatch to the Court, of February, alluding to the state of the Company's interests in Bengal, observed:

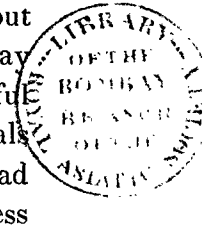
Council's testimony to Lord Clive's merits.

"We should be wanting in the just praises of superior merit, and in gratitude for the essential services performed by Lord Clive, if we failed to acknowledge that, to the prudence and vigour of his administration, you are chiefly to ascribe the present flourishing condition of your affairs. Firm and indefatigable in his pursuits, he joined, to the weight of personal character, a zeal for your service,

vice, and a knowledge of your interests, which could not but insure success." 1767. BENGAL.

They then drew a comparison between the state of the country on his Lordship's arrival, in 1765, and that in which he left it on his departure for England, in January, 1767: Comparison of the state of the country when Lord Clive arrived and when he left.

"We beheld a Presidency divided, headstrong and licentious; a government without nerves; a treasury without money, and a service without subordination, discipline, or public spirit. We may add that, amidst a general stagnation of useful industry and of licensed commerce, individuals were accumulating immense riches, which they had ravished from the insulted prince and his helpless people, who groaned under the united pressure of discontent, poverty, and oppression.



"Such was the condition of this presidency and of these provinces. Your present situation need not be described. The liberal supplies to China, the state of your treasury, of your investment, of the service, and of the whole country, declare it to be the strongest contrast to what it was.

"We repeat," added the Committee, "what we have already declared to Lord Clive, that no motive, no consideration, shall ever induce us to depart from that system of politics which has been recommended to us by precept and example, unless some very extraordinary event and unforeseen change should occur in the posture of your affairs."

One of the Company's covenanted servants, and

1767. BENGAL. all the officers who had subscribed an address to Sir Robert Fletcher, after he had been cashiered by sentence of a court-martial, were dismissed by the Council from the Company's service.

Shah Abdallah. In the month of March, the Council, having received undoubted intelligence of the advance of Shah Abdallah towards Delhi, (supposed to be instigated by Cossim Ally Khan,) took measures to support the King and Shuja Dowla, against whose territories the expedition was intended to have been ultimately directed. They felt that it was impossible to remain inactive spectators of an invasion which threatened to overwhelm the political system of all India. Nothing but the Company's influence prevented the King from making undue submission. Their demonstrations had the desired effect. Abdallah returned to Lahore, having compromised, for the sum of twenty-five lacs, his demands on the native powers. In his retreat, he experienced great obstructions from the Seiks, who were stated to be his irreconcileable enemies.

The plan of the Council had been one of defence. They purposely avoided making propositions to the Jauts, the Rohillas, or the Mahrattas, that they might stand clear from all troublesome engagements, considering the Company's security "to consist in the continuance of the balance of power, which it was their great object to maintain in India."

The

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The many unforeseen dangers and sudden irruptions, to which the Company's possessions in Bengal were continually exposed, induced the Council to press for the completion of the military establishment proposed by Lord Clive.* "That being maintained, the Company's revenues and possessions would be defended against the most considerable powers of the country."

Mahrattas.

The Mahratta leaders, Ragonaut Rao and Janojee, the chief of Nagpore, having reconciled their differences, the expectation of acquiring Cuttack was rendered hopeless, and led to a suspicion that a junction would take place between the Soubah, Hyder, and the Mahrattas, against Bengal; but as affairs were in a state of tranquillity, the Council resolved to give every possible aid to the Madras Presidency, in the hope that the power of Hyder might be reduced.

Sentiments of the King and Vizier towards the Company.

The King and Shuja Dowla were represented to be "more united to us, both by inclination and interest." Sensible that the security of their possessions, as well as the degree of consideration they held in the empire, depended upon our friendship, they were desirous to govern their conduct by principles the most likely to promote an amicable understanding with the Company. The third brigade was stationed with them, at their request, and a detachment from the second brigade had

* Letter to Court, 10th April, 1767.

1767. BENGAL. had crossed the Caramnassa, with the view of supporting what the Council felt to be the basis of the Company's alliance with the King and the Nabob, they agreeing to defray all extra charges: so that the Company incurred no extraordinary expense by the motion of these troops beyond the limits of the provinces. Chunagurwas garrisoned by the Company's forces. The Council added: "it is nevertheless our intention to recall all your forces, and punctually to observe your directions, whenever the disturbances which now prevail among the neighbouring powers will not endanger our own safety."

The Jauts. Jewaher Sing, the chief of the Jauts, was at the head of an army, endeavouring to recover the territory of which he had been dispossessed by the Mahrattas. He entered the Rohilla country, and advanced within a few miles of the King's dominions. Colonel Smith was directed to remain with the third brigade until his intentions were more fully developed.

The Council received, in the month of April, a pressing invitation from the Rajah of Nepaul, for aid against the Rajah of Goorcullah, * by whom he had been deprived of his country, and shut up in his capital. Although they felt that such a military enterprize was foreign to the system of politics by which they proposed to regulate their conduct,

* Now known as the *Goorkah Rajah.*

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conduct, they determined, after much deliberation, to send an expedition to Nepaul in support of the Rajah, between whose country and that of Bahar an advantageous trade had been carried on, and a considerable quantity of gold imported into Bengal. It was observed, that the vicinity of Nepaul to the Bettea country, which was in quiet possession of the Vizier, would bring additional commercial advantages; so that the Council entertained very flattering prospects of the issue of an expedition, of which "they hoped to send home a good account at the close of the season."*

Expedition to Nepaul.

Their anticipations were not realized. Captain Kinloch, who had been entrusted with the command, found it necessary to apply for reinforcements, without which he did not expect to succeed. This requisition occurring at the moment when the aid was required in support of the operations against Hyder, the expedition was recalled. Part of the lands belonging to the Goorcullah Rajah, bordering on the Bettea country, both rich and fertile, were kept to indemnify the charge already incurred.

Failure of expedition.

The Mahratta chief, Janojee, in demanding the *chout*, which had been regularly paid during the latter part of Aliverdy Khan's government, manifested a desire to treat for the cession of Cuttack to the Company. The President had several conferences

Proposed cession of Cuttack.

* Letter, 25th September, 1767.

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ferences with Janojee's vakeel, in conjunction with Mahomed Reza Khan, who had arrived at the Presidency. The annual payment, for the cession and the *chout*, it was proposed to fix at sixteen lacs, to be accounted for from the time the Company took charge of the Dewanny. An arrangement was prepared, but never finally acted upon. The object of the Council was to form a complete chain of the Company's influence and dominion, from the banks of the Caramnassa to the extremity of the Coast of Coromandel.

Chain of Company's influence.

Revenues in Bahar.

In noticing the state of the revenues in Bahar, the Council remarked upon the small balance which was irrecoverable; and pointed out the great advantages anticipated from the tour of inspection and examination by the Company's servants selected for that duty "in Bahar, and in the Dinagepore and Purnea countries." The Zemindars were stated to have been guilty of frauds, embezzlements, and even crimes of an atrocious character.

Court's views as to policy abroad.

The Court of Directors communicated to the Council at Calcutta their sentiments on the leading points in the advices from Bengal. They enjoined the Council:—

To promote happiness of the natives.

"Not to increase the revenues by any way which may oppress the inhabitants, whose happiness and prosperity we are desirous of cultivating upon every occasion, as it is upon their affections and confidence the permanency of our possessions will greatly depend.

"Never

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"Never to extend your possessions beyond their present bounds.

Keep within present bounds.

"Never to engage in a march to Delhi, nor enter into an offensive war, unless urged to it in pursuance of our treaty with the King and Shuja Dowla for the preservation of their dominions; and whenever called upon to march any troops for that purpose, to have Allahabad, Chunar, or some fortification, put in our possession.

"If these rules are strictly adhered to, we shall flatter ourselves our power and advantages in Bengal will obtain that permanency we have so long laboured at.

As to obtaining Orissa from the Mahrattas.

"We have paid much attention to your negociations with Janojee for settling the *chout* on the terms agreed between the Mahrattas and Aliverdy Khan. We think it both equity and sound policy to pay them their *chout*, and shall much approve it, if it can be done on the terms you mention, of their ceding to us their possessions in Orissa, which would join our Bengal possessions to the Circars, and would afford us the means of preventing any hostile attempts of an European enemy who might land in that part of Orissa.

Caution as to alliances with Indian powers

"From what appears in your proceedings, we think we discern too great an aptness to confederacies or alliances with the Indian powers: on which occasion, we must give it you as a general sentiment, that perfidy is too much the characteristic of Indian princes, for us to rely on any security with

1768. BENGAL. with them. But should you enter into a treaty to act in concert with them in the field, one of our principal officers is to command the whole: a pre-eminence our own security and our superior military skill will entitle us to.

Troops at Allahabad. "As all our views and expectations are confined within the Caramnassa, we are impatient to hear our troops are recalled from Allahabad.

"As it seems not impossible that Shuja Dowla may undertake to escort the King to Delhi, it becomes necessary we should give you our idea of the proper conduct to be held on that occasion, which entirely coincides with Lord Clive's opinion in his letter to the Select Committee, that to march any part of our army on such an expedition might bring on the total ruin of our affairs; and we add, that, should you be persuaded into so rash and dangerous a measure, we shall deem you responsible for all the consequences; and as such a measure would be attended with the greatest danger to our affairs, be assured we shall be extremely jealous of every one high in our service, civil or military, who shews a tendency to such an expedition.

"The only precautions we would recommend against Shuja Dowla's military progress, are, to prevent Europeans as much as possible from engaging in his service, and to be very watchful that no cannon, fire-arms, or artillery stores, find their way by the Ganges into his dominions.

"Every

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"Every method must be tried to get Monsieur Gentil, and every European, from his country, observing to use therein such means as shall not hurt the dignity or independency of Shuja Dowla, or leave room for the French to construe them as violations of the friendship between the two crowns."*

"As we look with a favourable eye on every attempt for the extension of commerce, we do not disapprove the expedition to Nepaul, and are sorry it failed of success. You did right not to renew the expedition till the state of your forces would better admit of it, and to hold in your possession lands taken from the Goorkah Rajah, as an indemnification for the expenses we had been put to; and they may be of use, should it hereafter be thought proper to renew the attempt, and we hope their amount has answered your expectations."†

French influence.

The extent of the French forces in the Indian seas was brought to the notice of the Court by the Council, who stated that ten ships were expected from France, seven of which, the French alleged, were either to be sold or to remain in India. Four thousand of his most Christian Majesty's troops were at the islands, and more were anticipated. "So alarming a force, at a place from whence

* Letter to Bengal, 16th March, 1768.

† Letter to Bengal, 11th November, 1768.

1768. BENGAL. whence it is very difficult to procure the least information of their designs has induced us to have a very vigilant eye over our fortifications. It requires no great depth of judgment to foresee, that the assembling such a number of forces at the French islands can bode no good to your settlements in India. Nor are we without apprehensions, that, whenever the French are in a condition to cope with our nation in Europe, they will make some attempt on India: and even this may happen previous to a declaration of war, as, from the situation of the islands, they are masters of their own time and operations." A similar impression was entertained by the Council at Madras.

The following outline gives the position of the Company, towards the different powers of Hindostan, by whom the public tranquillity might have been essentially disturbed at that period.

Review of the powers of Hindostan.

The first great cause of British security was attributed to the general indigence of the Mogul empire, produced in a great measure by the invasion of Nadir Shah,* which gave a mortal blow to the overgrown wealth and arrogance of the Omrahs; but its effects were not immediately felt beyond the capital. The irruption of the Mahrattas ensued. Their undistinguishing rapine plunged cities and countries on the south side of the Ganges, from near

* In 1739.

near the frontier of Bahar on the east, to Sirhind on the north and west, into misery and distress, The expedition of Shah Abdallah followed: his operations were principally confined to the Punjab, yet the vast sums he levied were felt severely throughout the country. The decrease of specie produced a decay of trade and a diminution of cultivation. Although that cause was somewhat mitigated in the Company's provinces by the importation of bullion, yet in Benares and Mirzapore, the fact appeared to be beyond dispute. The financial means of the several powers being very limited, new levies were made by each, when hostilities against any were contemplated, the die being cast on a single campaign; their resources not admitting of their maintaining a second. The circumstance which tended to the security of the Company, was the discordancy of the principles, views, and interests of those neighbouring powers. 1768. BENGAL.

The majority of the princes of Hindostan had no natural right in the countries which they possessed. In the general wreck of the monarchy, every man seized what fortune threw in his way, and was rather studious to maintain it than to grasp at more. Hence the principal disturbances were to be traced to the Mahrattas, the Seiks, and Shah Abdallah, whose views were extended more to plunder than territorial acquisitions. Thus situated, it was in the power of the Company, with a watchful and active administration, The Native princes.

to

1768. BENGAL. to hold the general balance of Hindostan, and crush any combination. Allahabad was pointed out as the key of the surrounding territories. Its vicinity to the several countries of Shuja Dowla, the Rohillas, Jauts, and Mahrattas, accordingly determined the Council to retain a brigade out of the Company's provinces.

The King of Delhi. The King, Shah Alum, retained little of the authority or dominions of his ancestors, but what he derived from the Company.

Shuja Dowla. Shuja Dowla was the next ally of the Company; and, if gratitude could bind any man, the Company had the strongest hold upon him. His dominions, excepting the zemindarry of Bulwunt Sing, were on the north of the Ganges, and extended to the hills. He was considered well fitted to accomplish the Company's main point, of maintaining themselves as the umpires of Hindostan, rather than an enemy who, from his strength or situation, could occasion them any uneasiness or trouble.

Rohillas. The Rohilla chiefs held districts immediately contiguous to those of the King and Shuja Dowla. The principal ones were Ahmed Khan Bungish, Hafez Rahmet Khan, and Nijib-ul-Dowla, besides several of less importance, such as Dunedy Khan, Surdar Khan, &c. Though all were independent of each other, yet they derived their power from one stock, being of one tribe, that of Ally Mahommed Khan. Their joint forces were estimated at eighty thousand effective horse and foot. Their native

native hardiness, their dexterity with the sword, their skill in the use of war-rockets, ranked them in higher estimation than the ordinary Hindostan troops, and they were looked upon as a rising power. 1768. BENGAL.

The territories of Ahmed Khan Bungish immediately bordered on the Corah country, Furruckabad being the capital. The possessions of Hafez Rahmet Khan joined the western limits of Shuja Dowla's dominions; they laid entirely on the north side of the Ganges, except Etawah and one or two other straggling pergunnahs. Those of Nijib-ul-Dowla were bounded by Sirhind on the west, and, beginning on the Jumna, seven coss east of Delhi, swept across the peninsula, to the northward of the Ganges, so as to join Hafez Khan's and Dunedy Khan's western frontiers.

The dominions of Jewaher Sing, or the country of the Jauts, extended in the peninsula from Agra, to within a few coss of Delhi on the west, and near to Etawah on the east. They possessed three forts, then deemed impregnable, and were in the receipt of a revenue of nearly two crores. Jauts.

Jewaher Sing was at war with Maharaja Madhu Sing, who possessed a large tract of country south-west of Delhi, and a revenue of a crore of rupees. Few could compare with Madhu Sing for the antiquity of his family, or the fame of his ancestors. His subjects were chiefly Rajpoots, born to war; the cultivators of his lands in time of peace,

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peace, and their undaunted defenders in the field. Proud of their ancient glory, they disdained to fly, and rushed with intrepidity to certain death or victory. It was stated, that, in a late engagement with the Jauts, their horse rode up through the fire of ninety pieces of cannon and all the musketry of the sepoys, till they came to swords, and, though thrice repulsed, renewed the attack, and were ultimately successful.

Seiks.

The Seiks' country commenced as far west as Sirhind. Their distance was thought to render it almost needless to mention them. Their rise was most extraordinary, from the lowest ebb of national weakness to a respectable power: their tribe, originally not more than ten thousand, amounting to eighty thousand fit for arms, possessing all the fertile country between Sirhind and Attok. Their power to repel or even to ruin an invader, was evinced in Shah Abdallah's expedition.

Such is the outline of the powers, exclusive of the Mahrattas, with which the Company had to deal at that period. In Bengal, a maintenance of a good understanding with the whole, was considered to be the wisest course of policy; and the Company's united force and means, the best preservative of peace.

Conduct of the Vizier suspicious.

Suspicions had been excited, at the commencement of this year, regarding the views and intentions of the Vizier. In the months of July and August, reports reached the Council that he had made

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made great progress in the new levies of troops; that he had invited auxiliaries into his service when tranquillity seemed to reign throughout the empire; that he was forming connexions with foreign powers, and had established a foundry, which already supplied him with a great quantity of cannon for field service; and his "amazing improvement in making small arms," by no means inferior to the best imported into India, combined to impress the Council with the necessity of arriving at some degree of certainty as to his future designs.

The line of policy to be observed towards Shuja Dowla was brought under the consideration of the Select Committee at the close of July.

No difference of opinion existed as to the necessity of some decided measures being taken to curb the ambitious spirit of the Vizier. His object was to obtain possession of the provinces of Corah and Allahabad. In order to gain over Colonel Smith, in promoting its attainment, he visited that officer in the early part of the year at Allahabad, and "proffered him four lacs of rupees in ready money, and to swear secresy on the Alcoran, if he would aid in its accomplishment."*

At an interview which Colonel Smith had subsequently with the King, his Majesty stated with emotion,

* Secret Consultations, 3d August, 1768.

1768. BENGAL. emotion, that the Vizier had applied to him for the same purpose, but without success; adding, "it should seem Shuja Dowla did not wish him to have an habitation of his own on the face of the earth."

Colonel Smith animadverted upon the delay which had occurred in adopting measures against Shuja Dowla. The President considered that no material inconvenience had arisen from delay, and on the 3d August recorded a minute, in which he proposed that the Vizier should be required, in the presence of the King, to reduce his forces within a given number, and that his Majesty's injunctions should be previously ensured to the same effect.

Colonel Smith was opposed to the President's plan. From the knowledge which he had, both of the King and the Vizier, he apprehended that a war would prove the unavoidable consequence; for, if the King should require of Shuja Dowla to disband any part of his forces, his haughty disposition would induce him to treat such orders with contempt, or he might answer, as Jewaher Sing had lately answered to an order of the King, "that when his Majesty shall regulate the twenty-two Soubahs of this empire, he will not be among the latest to shew obedience." Colonel Smith suggested, that a letter might be so framed as to press upon the Vizier, in friendly but forcible terms, the views and opinions of the Council, and that an embassy should accompany it, which he had

had no doubt would effectually accomplish their desire: he likewise proposed, that the second brigade should move to the Caramnassa. 1768. BENGAL.

After much discussion, and also differences of opinion as to the powers assumed by Colonel Smith in his military capacity, the Select Committee resolved, on the 17th August, to address two letters to the Vizier, and appointed a deputation, consisting of Mr. Cartier and Colonel Smith, members of the Select Committee, and Mr. Claude Russell, member of council, to proceed to the Vizier at Allahabad. Deputation to the Vizier.

The first letter stated that the Council urged a reduction of his forces, in order that all apprehensions as to the maintenance of a good understanding between him and the Company might be removed. The second letter was to be presented in the event of the first failing to gain the Vizier's consent to the proposed reduction, after the King's commands had been issued to him for that purpose.

To alleviate the odium he might incur from a diminution of his forces, it was proposed that the supernumeraries should be tendered as recruits to the Company's brigades. Nothing was to be omitted which might lead to an amicable adjustment. They were likewise instructed to represent to the King and Shuja Dowla, the necessity of providing a fund for the payment of the troops at Allahabad, and to suggest, that two or

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Deputation to Vizier. The deputation reached Benares on the 17th November. The Vizier arrived there the following day, having declined the meeting at Allahabad. At the first conference, Shuja Dowla manifested every disposition to fall in with the views of the deputation; but at the next and subsequent interviews he evinced a totally different feeling. He enlarged on the state of his troops in former times; he insisted that he was not restricted to any particular number; that he had in no shape infringed the last treaty, and that it was surprising it should now be thought necessary to limit his forces. The same demand he observed might, with equal justice, be made on the Rohillas. The deputation, finding all expostulation vain, delivered the Committee's letter to the Vizier. After much discussion, he declared, with firmness, that he never would willingly reduce his force below 35,000 men, of which 8,000 should be horse. The low state of the Company's treasury, the arrears due to the troops, the situation of affairs on the coast, where success depended on supplies from Bengal, and the tenour of the Court's orders, made the Council most anxious to avoid all risk of a war, which might be hazarded by imposing conditions "too mortifying for his haughty spirit." They therefore consented to the 35,000 men

men being retained; but stipulated the various bodies of which that force should consist. To this the Vizier would not accede. The sepoys were fixed at 7,000 only; he insisted upon 10,000. Having arranged for the regular troops, he proposed that the irregulars, together with the mode of discipline, should be left to his option, and intimated his intention to go down to Calcutta, unless the point was conceded. 1768. BENGAL.

The tone assumed by the Vizier induced the deputation to break off the negotiation, and to announce their intention to proceed to the royal presence on the ensuing morning. This intimation had the desired effect. Shuja Dowla sent a message the following day to the deputation, when departing for Allahabad, stating that he was afraid they "had not rightly understood him." The deputation replied through Captain Harper, who came from the Vizier, that unless he acquiesced in what they had proposed, a further meeting was needless, and that they should persevere in their resolution to proceed to Allahabad. This communication produced a concession on the part of the Vizier to the modified terms. An agreement was drawn out and signed on the 19th November, confirming the former treaty, and stipulating that he should not entertain a greater number than 35,000 men, of which 10,000 were to be cavalry; ten battalions of sepoys; the Nujib regiment, 5,000, with matchlocks, to remain always Negotiation with Vizier.

1768. BENGAL. at its then establishment; five hundred for the artillery, and that number never to be exceeded; the remaining 9,500 were to be irregulars, neither to be clothed, armed, or disciplined, "after the manner of English sepoys." So long as the Vizier adhered to these articles, no matter was to be introduced in addition to what had been now agreed to. The arrangement was fully approved by the Council at Calcutta, who passed a resolution of thanks, on the 25th January, to the deputation for their services. The Nabob accompanied the deputies to Allahabad, and was received in the royal presence in quality of Vizier.

The views of the Directors on the proceedings of the Council were despatched to Bengal in the following year.

Court's views on the proceedings as to Shuja Dowla.

"We have constantly enjoined you to avoid every measure that might lead you into further connexions, and have recommended you to use your utmost endeavour to keep peace in Bengal and with the neighbouring powers; and you, on your part, have not been wanting in assurances of your resolution to conform to these our wishes.

"Yet, in the very instructions which you have given to the deputies sent up to Shuja Dowla with professions of friendship, you have inserted an article, which will not only give fresh cause of jealousy to Shuja Dowla, but engages you likewise in disputes with other powers still more distant.

"We

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"We mean the article whereby they are directed to apply to the King for a grant of two or three circars, which belonged, you say, originally to the Eliabad province, but were unlawfully possessed, some time since, by the Hindooput Rajah.

"Is it our business to inquire into the rights of the Hindooput Rajah, and the usurpations he may have made upon others? And, supposing the fact to be proved, does such an injustice on his part give us any claim to the disputed districts?

"If the districts in question belong to the Eliabad province, they are a part of Shuja Dowla's undoubted inheritance; and supposing him to waive his right, you cannot send a man nor a gun for defence of these new acquisitions without passing through his country, which will be a perpetual source of dispute and complaint.

"Nor does the mischief stop here. The Hindooput Rajah, who, by all accounts, is rich, will naturally endeavour to form alliances, to defend himself against this unexpected attack of the English. Then you will say your honour is engaged, and the army is to be led against other powers still more distant.

"You say nothing in your letters of this very essential article of your instructions to the deputies."*

"In several of our letters, since we have been engaged

* Letter to Bengal, 11th May, 1769.

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"The Rohillas, the Jauts, the Nabob of the Deccan, the Nabob of Oude, and the Mysore chief, have each in their turn kept the Mahrattas in action, and we wish them still to be able to do it; it is, therefore, with great concern we see the war continuing with Hyder Naigue, and a probability of a rupture with Shuja Dowla and Nizam Ally. In such wars, we have everything to lose, and nothing to gain: for, supposing our operations be attended with the utmost success, and our enemies reduced to our mercy, we can only wish to see them restored to the condition from which they set out; that is, to such a degree of force and independence as may enable them still to keep up the contest with the Mahrattas and with each other. It would give us therefore, the greatest satisfaction to hear that matters are accommodated, both at Bengal and on the coast: and in case such a happy event shall have taken place,

place, you will do your utmost to preserve the tranquillity."*

Differences with the French at Chandernagore.

In July, 1769, the proceedings of the French led to a belief that they meditated some movement against the Company's settlements. Under the plea of repairing a drain round the town of Chandernagore, to prevent the effects of inundations, which it was represented had proved fatal to the inhabitants, they carried the works to such an extent as to create strong suspicions. A field-officer was accordingly deputed from Calcutta, in a public capacity, for the purpose of examining and reporting upon the state of the works. The result satisfied the Council that their suspicions were too well founded. The proceeding was an infraction of the eleventh article of the Treaty of Paris; and having remonstrated ineffectually, they required that the works should be destroyed. The French not only refused compliance with the requisition, but carried them on with more vigour; in consequence of which, the Council gave peremptory orders for their demolition. This, and subsequent acts regarding the French in Bengal, gave rise to representations from the French Court to that of St. James's. The arrangements projected for adjusting the difference,† will be found to have involved the Company's representatives in serious

* Letter to Bengal, 30th June, 1769.

† Letter to Bengal from the Court of Directors, 27th June 1770:

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serious discussions, with the accredited agent on the part af the Crown.

Mogul determines to proceed to Delhi.

The President, when at Bauleah, in the month of May, received a letter from the Mogul, announcing his determination to proceed forthwith to Delhi, with the troops of his Vizier, in order to take possession of the throne and dominions of his ancestors, and applying for the aid of two battalions of sepoys and some field-pieces, agreeably to an alleged promise of Lord Clive, whenever he should march towards his capital. The Council considered the intended requisition favourable to the recall of the forces from Allahabad. Having, therefore, deliberated on the orders of the Court, they determined to grant the King the aid which he requested. At the moment when the enterprize was to be commenced, the King's minister, Munerah-ud-Dowlah, on returning from the royal durbar, was accosted within the precincts of the palace by his majesty's guards, who, in a tumultuous manner, demanded an increase of pay and the arrears then due. The reply of the Nabob being

Council resolve to aid his views.

1770:—"His Majesty has constituted Sir John Lindsay his plenipotentiary for examining into the supposed infractions of the late treaty of peace, you will afford him the necessary information and assistance, whereby he may be enabled to answer the complaints of the French plenipotentiary, to justify your conduct, and to defend those rights of the British Crown which were obtained by express stipulation in the Treaty of Paris, and which appear to have been invaded by the proceedings of the French at Chandernagore."

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being unsatisfactory, one of the inferior officers drew his sword, with an intent to destroy him, and would have effected his purpose, but for a faithful Coffrey, who exposed his own life to save that of the Nabob; the latter escaped, but six of his followers fell a sacrifice. The King sent for General Smith: on enquiry, it did not appear that any arrears were due, and there was strong reason to believe it to be a design formed by some people of rank to destroy the Nabob. Munerah-ud-Dowla shortly after retired from the Court, with the permission of the King, and resided at Patna.

Vizier's troops revolt.

At the same time, three of the best battalions in Shuja Dowla's service took up arms against him. They were repelled, and a severe example was made by the Vizier, who conducted himself with great energy. The event lessened his confidence in his troops, and tended to reconcile him to the reduction to which he had been constrained to submit.

Vizier's appeal in favour of M. Gentil.

Upon being urged to dismiss from his presence M. Gentil, in accordance with the promise which he had made to the Council, he stated, "that if it was insisted upon, he should comply; but that, at a time when the hand of adversity was upon him, when all those whom he had clothed and fed forsook him, when he was abandoned by his own countrymen and by those of the same religion, this man, who was a stranger, of a different nation and different religion, forgot him not, but partook of his misfortunes.

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tunes. What a reflection will it then be upon me, if I am obliged to chase this man from my dominions! Assure the English chiefs, that I will be responsible that he shall never do any thing to their prejudice; the moment I discover such intention, he loses my friendship: at the same time, I will consider it as a mark of theirs, if they will not urge the performance of my promise concerning him." The Council abstained from urging the performance of the promise. Circumstances arose which cast a doubt upon the sincerity of the Vizier's declaration, but the result proved that it was made in good faith. The Vizier subsequently declared to the Company's officer commanding their troops, that should hostilities commence between the French and English, he should feel it unbecoming in him to entertain any man who was the enemy of our nation. He desired that this resolution might not be communicated to the Council, as he was determined to take such a course without any requisition on their part, in order that he might have the merit of it.

Mogul defers proceeding to Delhi.

These occurrences led the King to postpone his movement towards Delhi. The Company's troops were withdrawn, by the month of September, from Allahabad. The Council stated: "Nothing but the obligations to support our national faith, or to provide for the actual supply of these provinces, shall induce us to march your troops beyond the Caramnassa."

Brigadier

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Brigadier General Smith resigned in November, being succeeded in the command of the forces by Brigadier General Sir Robert Barker. In December, Mr. Verelst relinquished the President's chair to Mr. Cartier.

Mr. Cartier succeeds to Mr. Verelst.

Shuja Dowla reinstated in the Mogul's confidence.

The Vizier, notwithstanding his former hatred of Munerah-ud-Dowla, now earnestly entreated the King to reinstate him in his councils. His motives for so doing were not very apparent. It was surmised that, by removing all suspicion, he thought that he should the better secure his own supremacy: if such was the fact his dissimulation attained his object. The King was inexorable in his determination not to recall the Nabob; upon which Shuja Dowla repaired to the presence, embraced the lucky moment, and was invested with every honour and authority, both nominal and real. This unexpected reconciliation between the King and the Vizier, received additional strength from the marriage which was shortly to be celebrated between one of the royal princes and his Excellency's daughter. Munerah-ud-Dowla had invariably opposed the expedition to Delhi. The King, by the confidence which he now reposed in Shuja Dowla, placed himself entirely in his hands.

Cossim Ally Khan.

At this period, Cossim Ally Khan* emerged from the obscurity in which he had so long remained, and

* *Vide* page 92.

1769. BENGAL. and became once more an actor on the political stage of Hindostan. It was stated, that the Ranee of Gohud had invited him to reside at Gwalior, as a place better fitted for his schemes than the country of the Rohillas. A Mahratta army was hovering between the country of the Rajpoots and Jauts, and a large body of Seiks was in the neighbourhood of Paniput; Nujib-ud-Dowla was in the field, and the divisions amongst the Jauts grew more inveterate. This state of things necessarily obliged the Council to keep a watchful eye on the course of events. Although the movements of Cossim terminated without any important result, it appeared that the King, who was the mere puppet of the Vizier, had been in correspondence with him, and that his Majesty's regard towards the Company had evidently diminished.

The Nabob of Bengal, Syoof-ud-Dowla, died in March, of the small-pox, which raged with great violence at Moorshedabad. He was succeeded by his younger brother, Maborek-ud-Dowla, about ten years of age. Rajah Bulwunt Sing died at Benares on the 23d August, and was succeeded by his son Cheyt Sing.

1770. Mahrattas' hostile demonstration. The Mahrattas were at this time the cause of serious apprehension to the Council. From their forces having continued so long a period on the borders of the country of the Rajpoots, it was supposed that they were satiated with plunder, and would have retreated, as usual, on the commencement

mencement of the hot weather, and repass the Ner- 1770.
budda. Instead of such a course, they pursued BENGAL.
their conquests. The whole of the territories of the Jauts to the south of the Jumna, and between that river and the Ganges, submitted to their arms, excepting the forts of Deeg and Agra, which, it was stated, they never could hope to possess, but by voluntary submission or treachery: a circumstance that would, at all events, present a check to their progress. The treasure deposited in these forts was supposed to amount to many crores, and all that was wanted to apply it with effect was a more able and more resolute leader of the Jauts than Null Sing. Amidst the whole of the movements, the Mahrattas did not manifest any hostile designs against the Company's provinces: but a project was formed for the purpose of raising up a new king, in opposition to Shah Alum, who was considered a prisoner in the hands of the Company: but to this project even two of the Mahratta generals refused their concurrence. The King evinced apprehensions of the Mahrattas, whilst the conduct of the Vizier was not free from suspicion; as at the moment that the Mahrattas were threatening his frontier, and when he ought to have been prepared to oppose their progress, he was amusing himself in hunting in a distant part of his dominions.

The conduct of the French, notwithstanding the anxious desire evinced by the Council to avoid disputes,

1770. BENGAL. disputes, continued to give rise to frequent altercations; the former magnifying matters of little moment into affairs of consequence, for the foundation of disputes between the two courts in Europe. As a preparation against any attempts, a militia was formed at Calcutta, composed of the Company's civil servants and the European inhabitants. A naval force was likewise sent from England, to protect the British interests, the whole expense of such aid being borne by the Company.

Calcutta militia.

The Directors having expressed a desire to learn, whether a trade could be opened with Nepaul; and, if cloth and other commodities might not find their way to Thibet, Lhassa, and the western parts of China: the Council deputed Mr. Logan, of the medical service (who had, on a former occasion, accompanied Captain Kinloch,* and was perfect master of the language), to prosecute the inquiry, and furnished him with the necessary credentials to assist him in what they termed a "hazardous enterprize."

Mission to Nepaul.

The affairs of Bengal having been brought down from Lord Clive's appointment in 1765, to the period when the Special commission of supervision was determined upon by the Company, the proceedings of the two Presidencies of Madras and Bombay will be given for the same term, and will comprise the measures in which his Lordship and his successors took part regarding those two settlements.

* *Vide* page 181.

CHAPTER V.

1765. MADRAS.

THE Councils, of Calcutta and Madras, had pressed upon the attention of the Home authorities, the importance of establishing a permanent influence in the Northern Circars. The resumption by the French of their possessions in India, under the treaty of peace, led the President of Fort St. George to suggest to Lord Clive the expediency of obtaining from the Mogul sunnuds for the circars of Rajahmundry, Ellore, Mustaphanagur, Chicacole, and Condavir or Guntoor.

Northern Circars.

The circars formed an appendage to the Soubah of the Deccan. Salabat Jung, in 1752, gave Condavir, on the south side of the Kistna, to the French East-India Company, as a perpetual jaghire; and soon after ceded to them the other town north of that river, for the maintenance of the troops in the immediate service of M. Bussy. When Colonel Forde took Masulipatam, and put an end to the authority of the French in the Deccan, all the five circars were restored to the Soubah, who consented, at the same time, that the family of Vizeramrauze should continue in the management

1765. MADRAS. management of the Chicacole circar, as a reward for fidelity and attachment to the Company.

The Circar of Condavir, or Guntoor, was also conferred as a jaghire on Bazalet Jung, third brother of Salabat Jung, from which he still received an annual tribute. The other circars had been put under the management of different persons. In 1762, they were offered as a jaghire to the Company, on the same terms as they had been formerly held by the French; but as those terms involved the sending assistance into the Deccan, it was considered too onerous an obligation, and the offer was declined. Hussain Ally acted as the ambassador from the Nizam. From the failure of his mission, he fell into disgrace: but, through the aid of the Nabob of the Carnatic, and the advance of a considerable sum of money, he effected terms, and procured for himself the management of those countries, and at the request of the Nizam was joined* by a detachment of the Company's troops, in expectation of re-establishing a proper government. The zemindar never accounted with any of his managers unless compelled by force, and the country had been generally plundered by the strongest of the contending parties. Hussain Ally, supported by the Company, though with a very small force, got possession of the circars of Rajahmundry, and

* *Vide* page 107.

Ellore, and Mustaphanagur: having engaged to put the Company in possession of them, whenever required, a reasonable maintenance being secured to him should that event take place. 1765. MADRAS.

On the 14th October, the Council at Madras advised the Directors, that Lord Clive had, at the instance of Mr. Palk, the President at Fort St. George, obtained sunnuds from the Mogul for the five Northern Circars, and a confirmation of the jaghire granted by the Nabob to the Company. It was judged prudent to defer taking immediate possession of them, as the Council were not aware how far they might be required to send aid in troops to Bengal. The revenues of the Circars, for the next year, had been anticipated by Hussain Ally, to enable him to make good his payments to the Soubah, and support his troops; but the possession of the sunnuds was important, the French being thereby prevented from getting a footing in them. Sunnuds for the Circars obtained from the Mogul.

The Nizam having marched to Berar, General Caillaud was appointed to command the troops: he proceeded in January, and took possession of the Bessoara Pass. The sunnuds, or grants, were published at Masulipatam the 3d of March, and received there with general satisfaction. The fort of Condapilly, which in a great measure secured the pass into the Circars, was carried by assault, on the 7th March. The Council determined to take the countries immediately into their own

1765. MADRAS. hands, to receive from the zemindars the outstanding balances, and to use every means for discharging Hussain Ally's troops.

In April, the Directors were advised of the measures adopted for establishing the Company's authority in the Circars, and of the difficulty of prevailing on the Nabob of the Carnatic to remain on terms with Hyder, who had made such extensive conquests on the Malabar coast. "As an instance of the Mysorean's sincerity," the Council stated, "Hyder has consented to surrender to the Nabob the fort of Milpaddy, which guards a pass to the westward of Tinnevelly, and was given into the Mysore hands by Moorteis Ally, about the time of the surrender of Vellore."

The proceedings of the Madras government created considerable alarm in the mind of the Nizam, who looked upon the Nabob as the cause. To remove this impression, the Council suggested that the Nabob should despatch a proper person, to satisfy the Nizam that he had not the least concern in the transaction. The party deputed was instructed to assure him, that the Council desired to remain on the most friendly terms, that their views extended no further than the possession of the Circars, and in order to settle the treaty more readily, they contemplated negotiating it through the Nabob. Before the party had set out, the Nabob received a letter from the Nizam, and one also

Differences between the Nizam and the Nabob.

also from his Dewan, upbraiding him for not having endeavoured to prevent the Council taking possession of the Circars, and recommending him to prevail on them to withdraw their troops. 1766. MADRAS.

It appeared that the Soubah* was in great want of funds, and that his principal dependence was on Hyder Ally, to whom he had made overtures for assistance. The Council felt that he could not give them much trouble as Hyder's vakeel was at the same moment soliciting the alliance of the Company. Under these circumstances, they judged it best that the Nabob's messenger should proceed, as originally intended, to the Nizam. The latter was deaf to every proposition which wore the least appearance of coming through or from the Nabob. The Council, alive to the importance of securing the Nizam, not only with reference to the growing power of Hyder and his great wealth, but also the Mahrattas and the preservation of a communication with Bengal, resolved to instruct General Caillaud and Mr. Smith to proceed to Hyderabad, to put the Nizam in complete possession of their motives and intentions regarding the Circars, and their proposition for a treaty with him. At this period, the Council received a communication from the Select Committee in Bengal, and the President another from Lord

* The *Soubah* and *Nizam* is the same party, although the two designations may be used indiscriminately.

1766. MADRAS. Council in Bengal propose an alliance with the Nizam.

Lord Clive, containing a plan for an alliance with the Nizam, and offering to join the Madras force with one entire brigade, in assisting him to settle his government, and to carry into effect a plan which Lord Clive had contemplated on his arrival in India, of regaining possession of Cuttack, situated between Ganjam and Balasore, in order to make the junction of the two presidencies complete.

The proposition appeared well calculated to preserve the Company's possessions and the whole country in peace, and at the same time to form a barrier against the invasions of the Mahrattas, both as regarded Bengal and the Carnatic. The aid which Lord Clive suggested should be proffered to the Nizam, as an inducement for his falling into the views of the Council, consisted of two hundred infantry, one hundred artillery, and three battalions of sepoys. The Council apprized the Bombay Presidency of the measures in contemplation, and remarked, "it is in your power to oblige both the Mahrattas and Mysoreans to attend to their own concerns."

Treaty with the Nizam.

The treaty, which consisted of fourteen articles, was signed at Hyderabad on the 12th November. It was termed one of alliance and friendship between the Company and the Nizam. The Company, in consideration of the grant of the Circars, engaged to have a body of troops ready to settle the affairs of his Highness's government in every thing

thing that was right and proper, but with liberty to withdraw them, should the state of affairs, or those of the Carnatic, render it necessary. Whenever the troops were not supplied by the Company, or required by the Nizam, the latter was to receive from the Company nine lacs per annum. The Chicacole circar was to be reduced as soon as possible: that of Mustaphanagur having been given by the Nizam to his brother, Bazalet Jung, as a jaghire, the Company were not to take possession of it until his death; but should he occasion disturbance in the circar, then the Company were to have it in their power to assume it. The diamond mines were to remain in the possession of the Nizam. The fort of Condapilly was to be garrisoned by the Company's troops, a killedar being maintained therein on the part of the Nizam. 1766. MADRAS.

The most material clause of the treaty was that which provided for an indefinite support in troops to the Nizam. Upon this point the Council stated that, in the course of the negociation, General Caillaud had discovered that the Soubah was absolutely determined, in the event of his concluding a treaty, to proceed against Hyder, for which purpose he had engaged the service of the Mahrattas, and stipulated that the Council should cooperate with him in the undertaking.

The view of the Directors on this transaction was communicated to Bengal the 25th March, 1768. Observations of Court of Directors on the treaty.

"We have taken the negociations and treaty with

1766. MADRAS. with the Soubah of the Deccan into our most serious consideration, and are much alarmed at the state of your affairs by your last advices. The examination into your proceedings has led to a review of all that has passed on the business of the Circars, from your first entertaining the idea of obtaining possession of them.

"The exclusion of the French from the Circars has been our principal view in obtaining them, but we have ever shewn a repugnance to the holding them on the terms of assisting the Soubah with our troops, and such, too, have been your constant sentiments, until 1766.

"In your letter of the 2d of October, 1761, paragraph 18, your system was, to suffer the contending parties in the Deccan to weaken themselves, and not to grasp at more than you could hold.

"In the following year, the Soubah, distressed by his war with the Mahrattas, consents to your holding the Circars, on your agreeing to pay him half the revenues of them; but he revokes the grant the moment his danger from the Mahrattas ceases. In 1764, he is disposed to grant them, on condition of your keeping up a body of troops in the manner the French did; but when you found it would require so great a force as seven hundred infantry, a company of artillery, and three thousand sepoys, besides a proper force in the Circars, you reject the terms, as inadequate to the expense and danger that may be incurred by them.

"The

"The growing greatness of Hyder Ally was but a weak pretence for a junction with the Soubah. We do not conceive you really thought his army, or any country troops in Hindostan, could endanger the Carnatic in a defensive war; but had you entertained such an apprehension, the whole of our experience in the country wars shows how much danger, difficulty, and expense, and how little assistance, is to be derived from any country alliance in a general action, more especially with the Soubah's army, the most undisciplined rabble of all. 1766. MADRAS

"Upon the same principle, we disapprove Lord Clive's ideas of a general alliance against the Mahratta powers, and look for safety and success in our own force only, and their divisions.

"We perceive Lord Clive's opinion has had great weight; but had that been your guide, you would never have concluded the treaty on the terms you have; for in his Lordship's letter to Mr. Palk, of the 11th August, he says, he thinks two hundred infantry, a company of artillery, and three battalions of sepoys, sufficient to answer the purpose of supporting the Soubah.

"In your conduct in the negociations with the Soubah, there is a yielding temper throughout the whole negociation, which implies a want of firmness in your negociator.

"The general alliance with the Soubah and Mahrattas produced the effect we always shall expect

1766. MADRAS. expect from alliances among powers uncontrolled by the law of nations, or any principle to establish good faith among them.

"The Mahrattas, instead of being reduced, are like to be aggrandized, by their conquest of the Mysore dominions, which brings them so much nearer to the Carnatic. The Soubah's weakness and indigence seem beyond all relief; and Hyder Ally, if less formidable to the Soubah and the Mahrattas, is more likely to be an enemy to us, and to embrace every opportunity of disturbing the Carnatic.

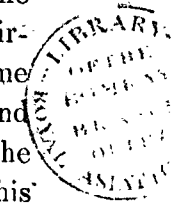
"Should the Circars continue in our possession, it must be observed as a general rule, that no European is to interfere in the collection of the revenues, further than to receive the rents from Hussain Ally, or the rajahs who held the districts, and are to account to the chiefs of Masulipatam or Vizagapatam, as you shall direct: neither are they to interfere in the managment or the government of the country, farther than to check the renter if guilty of any grievous oppression.

"Before we leave the subject, we must observe to you, that we think it very extraordinary the whole negociation with the Soubah should have been conducted by a military officer, unaccompanied by a civil servant. When Mr. Pybus's illness was known, another should have been immediately appointed, for it is highly displeasing to us,

us, and contrary to our orders, that a military officer should be alone employed in negociations of our commercial or political interest." 1765. MADRAS.

It has already been seen that the conduct of Hyder, on the Malabar coast, led the Council at Bombay to apprehend a rupture between him and the Company.

At Madras, nothing more was heard of him until the month of July, when he informed the Council that he had sent for his vakeel. This circumstance created suspicion, it being at the same time confidently reported, that he had solicited and and received from the Nizam a sunnud for the Carnatic. This was in a degree confirmed by his having suddenly quitted his conquests on the Malabar coast, and proceeded to Seringapatam, where, it was stated, he had placed a child upon the throne, and then posted his army at Coimbatore, near the confines of Caroor.* Notwithstanding these movements, the Council were assured by a vakeel from Hyder, that he desired nothing more than to live in perfect friendship with the Company, and for this purpose he requested an English gentleman might be sent to him to settle terms. Mr. Bourchier, a member of the Council, was deputed for the purpose, and set out with the vakeel. When he reached Arcot, he was desired to Proceedings of Hyder.



* This is explained by the report which had reached the Bombay Council, of his having adopted the son of Chunda Saib.

1766. MADRAS. to wait for answers from Hyder regarding the place of their interview. He was afterwards informed that Hyder had ordered the vakeel to go to him alone. Mr. Bourchier returned to Madras, and reported to the Council that the vakeel, on quitting him, had stated that he had received a letter from his master disapproving of an English gentleman coming to him.

Council determines on hostilities with Hyder.

The Council considered the whole conduct of Hyder to be very questionable. When they reflected upon his immense conquests, his great riches, and the power which he had established, added to his pride and ambition, they felt that no opportunity should be lost to reduce that power within its ancient and proper bounds, and to check the intentions of a man, who, by his violence and oppression, had rendered himself obnoxious to all the country governments, and dangerous to the peace and tranquillity of the Carnatic. They therefore, viewed the resolution taken by the Nizam to be a very important circumstance,* and resolved to assist him with such a force as would insure success, and at the same time satisfy the Nizam of the sincerity of their intentions. Information of the bearing of the Nizam towards Hyder was despatched to Bombay, that the President and the Council there might take the necessary measures for securing the

* *Vide* page 213.

the Company's possessions on that side, and be prepared to make use of their forces in the event of a rupture, in which case they concluded that many of the powers of the Malabar coast would be ready to embrace the opportunity of recovering their ancient possessions. 1766. MADRAS.

Having reason to believe that the treaty with the Nizam had been concluded, the Council, in November, required Sitteramrauze, who had been backward with his kists, to state whether he would submit to the Company's government by keeping up his agreement. The situation of Vizagapatam, in the midst of the Chicacole circar, being well calculated to preserve the country in obedience, the Council contemplated placing it in a state of security against any country enemy. They originally intended to have taken the other circars into their own management, but, under the advice of General Caillaud, they judged it better to conclude an agreement with Hussain Ally, to rent them for a term of years. The Pittapore Rajah, one of the zemindars of the Rajahmundry district, "being unwilling to submit to the reasonable demands of Hussain Ally," the Council determined to send a force beyond that stipulated to be paid for, in order to reduce the zemindar to obedience. Circars.

They advised the Court of Directors of the whole of the foregoing measures, in their despatch of the 22d January. On the 20th of that month, Colonel Smith had an audience of the Nizam, in camp near Hyderabad, 1767.

1767. MADRAS. Hyderabad, when he proposed moving to the banks of the Kistna, where he expected the Company's troops. The whole joined the Nizam on the 19th. In the month of March, the Council, believing that Hyder had been using means to induce the Soubah "to make up matters," and that the latter had been in communication with the Mahrattas, attempted, but without success, to discover whether such was the fact. In order to strengthen the hands of Colonel Smith, Mr. Bourchier was sent to join in the endeavour to bring the Nizam to a determination. They were at the same time obliged to march a force into the Madura and Tinnevelly districts, to subdue some refractory Polygars, who not only defied the Nabob's managers, but had defeated a small body of military sent against them. After much negociation, the Nabob consented to discharge the whole of the "useless rabble," of which his troops consisted, and to depend entirely upon the Company's forces for the defence and security of his possessions.

Vacillating conduct of the Soubah.

Soubah disposed to join Hyder.

The Nizam continued not only to act with indecision, but even treated the Company's commanders and troops with disregard. In the interim, the Mahrattas settled their affairs with Hyder, and it soon became apparent that a negociation was in progress between Hyder and the Nizam, the latter wavering only as to the amount which he was to receive for breaking with the Company.

These events present a true picture of eastern intrigue

1767. MADRAS.

intrigue and deception. A few weeks had scarcely elapsed since the Soubah had been resolute in adopting measures to reduce Hyder's power, and now he is found forming an alliance with that ambitious chief, and abusing his connexion with the Company.

The greater portion of the Company's force was accordingly withdrawn, with the consent of the Nizam, who engaged to remit the two lacs on account of the Chicacole circar, and likewise to give to the Company and their troops one-fifth of the money collected from Hyder. The negociation with Hyder was continued from May to the close of June, when the Nizam's Dewan gave a sunnud to the Company for the remission on account of the Chicacole circar, and bills for a fifth of what Hyder was to pay. These proceedings were but just concluded, when reports reached the Council, that the Nizam with hostile intentions was entering the Carnatic. In July, all doubts were removed upon this point. His army, instead of marching northward, advanced towards Bangalore, and from thence to Oapatavady. At the close of the month, Hyder crossed the river near Seringapatam and proceeded to Bangalore, where, on the 16th August, his main body was joined by the Nizam.

Enters the Carnatic hostilely.

The Council caused all their troops to be forthwith collected and placed under Colonel Smith. Aid was requested from Bengal to secure the Circars,

Measures against Hyder.

1767. MADRAS.

cars, and the Council at Bombay were called upon to use their best exertions in assisting the designs against Hyder, whose power it was felt, sooner or later, must be reduced, as the only means of giving peace to the Carnatic and securing the Company's possessions. The Council observed: "It is not only his troublesome disposition and ambitious views now that we have to apprehend, but that he may at a favourable opportunity, or in some future war, take the French by the hand, to re-establish their affairs,—which cannot fail to be of the worst consequence to your possessions on the coast. He has money to pay them, and they can spare and assemble troops at the islands, and it is reported that he has already made proposals by despatches to the French king or Company in Europe."*

The Soubah and Hyder defeated.

On the 26th September, the joint forces of the Soubah and Hyder were defeated by Colonel Smith, who pursued them till within eight miles of the road from Trinomallee to Changama. Sixty pieces of cannon were taken. The want of cavalry prevented his more effectually following up the victory. During the operations, a body of Hyder's horse found means to advance to Choultry Plain. They plundered St. Thomé and the whole of the adjacent villages, carrying off several of the inhabitants, without the Council being able to afford them

Hyder's horse approach Madras.

* Letter to Court, 21st September, 1767.

them succour. The Council represented: "The continual reinforcements we had sent to camp had reduced our garrison so low, we were obliged to confine our attention entirely to the preservation of the Fort and the Black Town, for which purpose it was necessary to arm all the Company's civil servants, the European inhabitants, Armenians, and Portuguese." The detachments of the enemy consisted of three or four thousand cavalry, and continued in the bounds until the 29th September, when they moved off. The Council added: "As it is uncertain when the troubles we are engaged in will end, and as we must in the course of the war expect to have many Europeans sick, we must earnestly request you to send out as large reinforcements as possible." This despatch reached the Court by the *Hector* on the 22d April, 1768. It was acknowledged in the following terms:— 1767. MADRAS.

"The alarming state of our affairs under your conduct, regarding the military operations against the Soubah of the Deccan, joined with Hyder Ally, and the measures in agitation with the Mahrattas in consequence thereof, requiring our most immediate consideration, we have therefore determined on this overland conveyance by the way of Bussorah, as the most expeditious way of giving our sentiments to you on those important subjects. Court's views on the operations against Hyder.

"In our separate letter of the 25th March, we gave

1767. MADRAS. gave you our sentiments very fully on your treaty with the Soubah of the Deccan.

"After having for successive years given it as your opinion, confirmed by our approbation, that maintaining an army for the support of the Soubah of the Deccan was endangering the Carnatic, and would tend to involve us in wars, and distant and expensive operations, and the grant of the Circars was not to be accepted on such terms, you at once engage in that support, and send an army superior to that which, in the year 1764, you declared would endanger your own safety.

"The quick succession of important events in Indian wars puts it out of our power to direct your measures. We can only give you the outlines of that system which we judge most conducive to give permanency and tranquillity to our possessions.

"We should have hoped that the experience of what has passed in Bengal would have suggested the proper conduct to you: we mean, when our servants, after the battle of Buxar, projected the extirpation of Shuja Dowla from his dominions, and the giving them up to the King. Lord Clive soon discerned, the King would have been unable to maintain them, and that it would have broken down the strongest barriers against the Mahrattas and the northern powers, and therefore wisely restored Shuja Dowla to his dominions.* Such, too, should be your conduct with respect to the Nizam and

* *Vide* page 143.

and Hyder Ally, neither of whom it is our interest should be totally crushed. 1767. MADRAS.

"The Dewanny of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, with the possessions we hold in those provinces, are the utmost limits of our views on that side of India. On the coast, the protection of the Carnatic and the possession of the Circars, free from all engagements to support the Soubah of the Deccan, or even without the Circars, preserving only influence enough over any country power who may hold them, to keep the French from settling in them; and, on the Bombay side, the dependencies thereon, the possessions of Salsette, Bassein, and the castle of Surat. The protection of these is easily within the reach of our power, and may mutually support each other, without any country alliance whatever. If we pass these bounds, we shall be led on from one acquisition to another, till we shall find no security but in the subjection of the whole, which, by dividing your force, would lose us the whole, and end in our extirpation from Hindostan. Extent of the Court's views as to territorial possessions.

"Much has been wrote from you and from our servants at Bengal, on the necessity of checking the Mahrattas, which may in some degree be proper; but it is not for the Company to take the part of umpires of Hindostan. If it had not been for the imprudent measures you have taken, the country powers would have formed a balance of power among themselves, and their divisions would have

1767. MADRAS.

left you in peace; but if at any time the thirst for plunder should urge the Mahrattas to invade our possessions, they can be checked only by carrying the war into their own country. It is with this view that we last year sent out field-officers to our presidency at Bombay, and put their military force on a respectable footing; and when once the Mahrattas understand that to be our plan, we have reason to think they will not wantonly attack us.

Offensive wars and further acquisition to be avoided.

"You will observe by the whole tenour of these despatches, that our views are not to enter into offensive wars in India, or to make further acquisitions beyond our present possessions. We do not wish to enter into any engagements which may be productive of enormous expenses, and which are seldom calculated to promote the Company's essential interests. On the contrary, we wish to see the present Indian powers remain as a check one upon another, without our interfering; therefore, we recommend to you, so soon as possible, to bring about a peace upon terms of the most perfect moderation on the part of the Company, and when made, to adhere to it upon all future occasions, except when the Company's possessions are actually attacked; and not to be provoked by fresh disturbances of the country powers to enter into new wars."*

The troops were ordered into cantonments during

* Court's Letter, dated the 13th May, 1768.

ing the rainy season; preparations being made for resuming the field as soon as the weather would permit. The enemy took advantage of this step, and invested Veniambaddy, of which they got possession on the 8th November, and then laid siege to Amboor. The Council ordered the troops to assemble immediately at Vellore, to preserve the important fortress of Amboor, and to prevent the enemy from again penetrating into the Carnatic. Colonel Smith obliged them to withdraw from Amboor in December, and shortly after defeated them; Hyder proceeding to Covrapatam, where he fortified his camp. Colonel Smith followed, but abstained, in consequence of Hyder's strong position and the want of provisions, from again attacking him. Hyder, in order to cut off an expected convoy, put himself at the head of a select body of troops, and on the 20th December marched to Singarapettah, in the hope of intercepting it. Colonel Smith immediately detached Major Fitzgerald with some black cavalry and two companies of grenadiers. He fell in with and defeated Hyder, who retired to Tingra Cottah, and ultimately to Bangalore, leaving garrisons in all the forts in the valley. Tingra Cottah surrendered on the 12th February to Colonel Wood, who advanced against Daráporam, into which place Hyder had thrown six hundred of his best sepoys. The garrison stood a storm, in which they suffered greatly. Covrapatam surrendered to Colonel Smith on the

1767. MADRAS.

Operations against Hyder.

1768. MADRAS. 23d February. The troops under Colonel Wood proceeded to reduce Salem and Ashtour, the possession of which it was felt would greatly tend to the security of the Carnatic to the southward. Various other operations followed, which opened the road to Hyderabad. This circumstance, together with the success of the troops in other parts, induced the Nizam to desire terms of accommodation; and that the Council would send a person to him for the purpose. This was declined, on the ground that he was the aggressor; and it was insisted, as a preliminary, that he should withdraw entirely from Hyder, and send his Dewan with proposals to Madras. After some hesitation, he sent Ruccum-ud-Dowla to the Presidency on the 9th February. The negociation terminated in a treaty of peace between the Company, the Nizam, and the Nabob, on the 1st March. The Circars were ceded to the Company, the Nizam acknowledging the validity of the phirmaund from the Mogul. The Company agreed to pay him annually the sum stipulated by the former treaty, excepting the two lacs on account of the Chicacole circar, which the Nizam gave up. The sum to be paid him yearly was five lacs of rupees, out of which he agreed that the expenses of the war, about twenty-five lacs, should be deducted, at the rate of three lacs per annum. Care was taken so to word the treaty, that the payment of this sum should not appear to be by virtue of the Company's holding

Nizam desires terms of accommodation.

Treaty with Soubah.

holding the Circars from the Nizam, but only in consideration of the friendship existing between them. The Guntoor circar was left in the hands of Bazalet Jung, as in the treaty of Hyderabad. Entire possession of the fort of Condapilly, with the jaghire dependent on it, was given up to the Company. Hyder was publicly denounced by the Nizam as a rebel and an usurper, with whom no correspondence was to be maintained. The Nizam promised to assign and make over to the Company all his right and title to the dewanny of the Mysore country. The Nabob of the Carnatic was included in the treaty, "as well with the view of preventing the Soubah from molesting the Carnatic, as to hinder the Nabob from having any hopes towards the Deccan."*

1768. MADRAS.

Operations were carried on against Hyder. On the 20th March, Salem surrendered to Colonel Wood.

Operations carried on against Hyder.

Intelligence having reached Madras of the expedition fitted out at Bombay† to attack Hyder's settlements on the coast, Colonel Wood was ordered to proceed towards Sattiamungulum, to gain possession of a fort which had been lately built by Hyder, and secure an entrance into the Coimbatore country, and at the same time open a communication with the Malabar coast, to afford aid

Proceedings at Bombay against Hyder.

* Letter to Court, 1st March, 1768.

† *Vide* page 264.

1768. MADRAS. aid to the expedition from Bombay, against which the Council apprehended Hyder would direct his attention.

The fort of Kistnagherry, which had been invested by Colonel Smith in the month of February, did not capitulate till the 2d May, the enemy having a few days previously made a vigorous but unsuccessful effort, with a body of two thousand horse, one thousand sepoys, and six hundred peons, to throw in provisions.

Hyder had shewn himself a very formidable enemy, and convinced the Council of Madras that, from his increase of power, he would prove a dangerous neighbour. They had reason to believe that he was in treaty with the French, who had been collecting a force at the islands, of thirty companies of one hundred men each, amongst which were many artificers of all kinds. He had intimated a desire that his vakeel might be received at Madras. The Council declined, unless the vakeel was furnished with the conditions proposed as the basis for a negociation. They felt that the country powers would be apprehensive of joining the Company's interests, if they were liable to be cast off, without a clear understanding as to the position in which they would be placed towards those against whom they might have acted. They also considered it essential to lessen the power of Hyder; but had little reason to believe that he would sacrifice either power or ambition to allay any

Hyder evinces a disposition to come to terms.

1768. MADRAS.

any apprehensions. They observed, that they had a barrier to obtain to the Carnatic, their expenses to recover, and an extension of privileges and possessions to acquire for Bombay. With these views, they determined to pursue vigorous measures, in order to obtain a footing in Mysore before the rainy season obliged them to suspend operations.

Field-deputies appointed.

To promote these ends, two members of the Board were nominated, in the character of field-deputies, to proceed to camp, who, with Colonel Smith, were to act as a Committee, and to determine such measures with the Nabob as might be essential, without awaiting the decision of the Council at Madras, if the delay was likely to be detrimental to the public service. They were also to assist the Nabob in settling the country that might be acquired, to superintend all the measures, and to keep the charges within all possible bounds. The state of their finances was at this time most embarrassing. As very limited aid could be expected from Bengal, part of the money intended for the China investment was withheld.*

Financial embarrassment.

In the course of the operations, cavalry was indispensable, to enable the troops to follow up the advantages, as well as to oppose with effect that arm of the enemy. The want of such force was

* Letter to Court, 11th May 1768.

1768. MADRAS. Success against Hyder.

was severely felt. Vencatagherry surrendered to Colonel Campbell on the 16th June, and Muliavakeel on the 28th; from thence he proceeded to Ossour, where he was joined by the remainder of the army. That place surrendered on the 11th, and Amicalle on the 13th July. These forts formed a complete chain from Vellore to Bangalore, and their possession secured an uninterrupted communication. These successful operations led the Council to resolve on an attempt against Bangalore, which they deemed of the greater moment, from a report that the Nizam had a design of breaking with the Company, and that a negociation was actually on foot between him and the Mahrattas. Hyder also had a vakeel with the Nizam, and Ruccum-ud-Dowla, who had the principal share in concluding the treaty between the Company and the Nizam, was in disgrace, and it was reported that the latter and Mhaderao proposed, as soon as the rains was over, to attack the Nabob's and the Company's possessions.

The views entertained by the Court of Directors, and the course of policy which it appeared to them the Council should have followed, were communicated to Madras, and a Select Committee was nominated to carry into effect their instructions regarding the affairs under that presidency.

Court of Directors condemn the treaty with the Soubah.

"In whatever light we view the 10th article of your treaty with the Soubah, we see nothing but weakness

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weakness, danger, and instability to our affairs. The Nabob Mahomed Ally, though highly esteemed by us for the sincerity of his attachment, and the long and faithful union of interest that has subsisted between him and the Company, is universally known to be a man of no resources in himself, and, consequently, the whole burthen of defending and supporting him in the Mysore country must fall upon us; with this disadvantage, that by deviating from the original purpose of restoring to every one his right, you lose all the natural interest of the country, there remaining no inducement for any one to join you: thus we should have a barrier to maintain at an immense distance from Fort St. George, and the Mahrattas for our neighbours.

"The situation you were in, when the *Egmont* sailed, was precisely that in which a peace seemed attainable on eligible terms. You were then in possession of all the chain of hills and forts, to form a strong barrier for the Carnatic, and we make no doubt but that Hyder Ally's repeated defeats would have induced him to pay a large sum of money for the expense of the war; and there it might have been closed with propriety.

"Instead of pursuing pacific measures with Hyder Ally, as we think you ought to have done, knowing, as you did, our sentiments with respect to extending our territories, you have brought us into such a labyrinth of difficulties, that

1768. MADRAS. that we do not see how we shall be extricated from them.

"But if it should have happened, when these advices reach you, that Hyder Ally should be extirpated, and it should not be inconsistent with any engagements you may have entered into, our wish would be, to have restored to the ancient Rajahs, and powers to whom they belonged, the several districts and countries taken from Hyder Ally, after reserving to us the passes and forts which serve as a barrier between Mysore and the Carnatic. Such a step must demonstrate to all the Indian powers with whom we are connected, that we mean to distribute to every man his own, and by a just, mild, and prudent conduct towards them, to evince that conquests and plunder are not the objects of our pursuit; but that we mean to confine ourselves to the branches of our commercial interest, and the benefit of such revenues as have been granted to us by Mahomed Ally.

"When we reflect on the vast length of country, from the northern parts of Chicacole, to the southern districts of Madura and Tinnevelly; the number of garrisons to be maintained, and the wild independence of most of the Rajahs and Poligars, from whom nothing can be collected but by a standing force, we regret our having ever passed the boundaries of the Carnatic, even for the possession of the Circars; for we have great doubts whether the charges will not always exceed the

the collections, and apprehend many ill consequences from so great a division of our forces. The preservation of the advantages we hold in the Bengal provinces, is the great object of our attention."* 1768. MADRAS.

"Upon principles of policy, we wish for a peace with Hyder Naigue, whenever it can be obtained upon the most moderate terms; for our policy is to avoid every thing that tends to the increase of the Mahratta power, which is evidently the misfortune of this war; for you are reduced to the necessity of being yourselves the proposers of new provinces to be added to the dominion of the Mahrattas, already possessed of half the Mogul empire.

"Whether the Mahrattas have accepted or not of your offer, certain it is, they will make the most use they can of the embroils of others. It is by this conduct they have arrived to their present degree of power; and our best policy is to check their growth by every opportunity, or at least to avoid lending our own force to their aggrandizement, which we certainly do, as often as we engage in wars with the few remaining chiefs of India, who are yet capable of coping with them.

"Nizam Ally and Hyder Naigue are two of those chiefs, and it is our true interest to preserve a good understanding with them. We do not mean

* Letter to Madras, 17th March, 1769.

1768. MADRAS. mean by this, that, after the long and expensive war which you have been most unfortunately engaged in, you should yield to Hyder Naigue, and accept of dishonourable terms; but, whenever he shews a disposition to peace, we would have you meet him half-way; and if a reasonable compensation can be obtained for our expenses, we desire no increase of territory, nor fresh grants and privileges of any kind.

"We have possessions enough in Bengal and the Carnatic to yield all the advantages the Company expect. What we want is, attention in our servants to their improvement and good management, and a time of peace and leisure to establish plans of economy and frugality, both in our own affairs and those of the Nabob of Arcot, whose debts and embarrassments will have no end, till he confines his views to the Carnatic."* Subsequent events will prove how truly the Court's prognostications were fulfilled.

The difficulty of obtaining monthly supplies to carry on the war, induced the Council to recommend to the Committee to make a vigorous effort at once against Bangalore. This measure was defeated by intelligence from Bombay. The Council at that presidency had promptly answered the call made upon them from Madras, for the purpose

* Letter to Madras, 30th June, 1769.

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Proceedings against Bangalore.

pose of attacking Hyder's possessions.* Mangalore was taken on the 1st March, and Onore surrendered on the 25th; but their operations against the Ally Rajah were ineffectual, owing to their being disappointed in the promised aid from the "Malabars." Their attempt to induce the Mahrattas to take part against Hyder, also failed; and an agent from Mhaderao laid claim to the Bednore and Soondah countries, and to such part of Mysore as might be taken. This was peremptorily refused by the President of Bombay; but he was empowered by the Council to stipulate, that if the islands of Salsette and Bassein,† with the several districts and revenues dependent upon each respectively; also Caranjah and the Mahrattas' share of the revenue of Surat were relinquished to the Company, the Mahrattas should be secured in their usual *chout* from the various governments and countries of the former rajahs on the coast,

Claims of the Mahrattas.

* *Vide* page 222.

† The Court of Directors, in a despatch to the Bombay Government in 1768, expressed their desire to obtain grants of both places:—

"The intimation you gave to our President and Council of Fort St. George, to use their endeavours with the Mahrattas to obtain a grant of Salsette and Bassein to us, we highly approve of; and we now recommend to you, in the strongest manner, to use your endeavours, upon every occasion that may offer, to obtain these places, which we should esteem a valuable acquisition. We cannot directly point out the mode of doing it, but rather wish they could be obtained by purchase than war."

1768. MADRAS. coast, who were to be reinstated in their possessions.*

The discussions terminated without any satisfactory result. The Council were advised that the enemy had appeared on the coast, and that Mangalore and Onore had been evacuated by the Company's forces with great precipitation, a party of the sick and some field-pieces falling into the hands of Hyder, who returned immediately to Bangalore. The views of the Council of Madras, notwithstanding these reverses, were still directed to the reduction of that fortress. The troops under Colonels Smith and Wood were ordered to unite and encamp near Onscotah, until the necessary supplies were collected for carrying on the siege. Before the junction of Colonel Wood, and the arrival of the heavy guns and stores, Hyder formed a design of surprising the camp of Morarirow, about half-a-mile on the right of ours, on the 23d August. He attacked it at night, with six thousand horse and a battalion of sepoys. Morarirow, with great presence of mind, ordered his men not to mount, by which they had greatly the advantage of the enemy among the tents, and soon obliged them to retire with considerable loss. Colonel Wood, having joined Colonel Smith at Boodicotah, on the 6th September, endeavoured to bring Hyder, who was encamped eight miles north

Operations against Hyder.

Hyder retaliates.

* Letter, April, 1768.

north of that place, to action: he retreated too rapidly for their force to come up with him. Perceiving that he was followed by only one body of troops, he surprised and took Malavagal. Colonel Wood immediately went to its relief, and attempted to recover the fort on the hill by escalade, but without success. Hyder's attempt to throw in a fresh body of troops, on the 28th September, brought on a general action, which lasted from eleven in the morning till sunset, when he retreated, leaving Colonel Wood master of the field. He retired to Chicamogloor, and, on his way, made an effort to take the fort of Murgomallee, which he abandoned on the approach of our troops. The Council, having ascertained from Bombay that he had made overtures for a negociation through the president there, despatched a communication to Mr. Hornby, the President, suggesting that he should inform Hyder, that the Council at Madras were not averse to peace, and that proposals would be received. Colonel Smith, who had advanced with his division of the army in pursuit of Hyder, near Punganoor, received a message from him, desiring to know whether he would grant him a peace. He was informed in reply, that, if he had anything to propose, he should freely open his mind; Hyder desired some person might be sent to him. Colonel Smith despatched his Dubash, the only person he had with him, to whom Hyder said,

1768. MADRAS.

Fruitless negociations with Hyder.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY

1768. MADRAS. said, "he was sensible he could not oppose us in the field, neither would he attempt it, but that he could give us much trouble; and as he was forced to quit his own country, he was determined to enter the Carnatic, and do all the mischief he could, and, if reasonable terms were refused him, he would come to the gates of Madras to make peace." The Dubash felt that he could make no answer. To another party sent by Colonel Smith, on the return of the Dubash, Hyder stated, "he was determined not to return to Bangalore; that he had left it well provided to the chance of war; that it was possible we might take it in a month, but he should have Seringapatam and Biddenore remaining, and that, rather than lose all, he would call in the Mahrattas." He also deputed a person of consequence to the field deputies, by whom such moderate terms were proposed, that, had he been sincerely desirous of peace, he would have acceded to them; but he abruptly broke off the negociation. The Council were satisfied his object had been to gain time, and to give him an opportunity of drawing off the several powers, by publicly announcing that peace had been concluded.

Apprehensions being entertained that Mhaderao would advance beyond the Kistna and join Hyder, the Bombay Council despatched a Resident to Poonah, to draw off his attention. The sincerity of the Soubah was again doubted, as he had

had also sent an agent to Mhaderao. Every attempt was accordingly resolved upon by the Madras Council to distress Hyder, both on the Malabar coast and in the Coimbatore country. The Council at Bombay, from a desire expressed by the Directors for peace, had abstained from further operations. 1768. MADRAS.

Such were the difficulties and embarrassments with which the Madras Council were surrounded, and so great were their apprehensions as to the Mahrattas, that Mr. Brome, who had been appointed Resident at Poonah, was authorized to propose a junction with Mhaderao, to enable him to conquer the Bednore country, although the Council were quite alive to the great increase of power that the Mahrattas would derive from that conquest.* Mr. Brome sent to Poonah.

The mission of Mr. Brome was of no avail. The unfortunate situation of the Company on the Malabar coast, arising from their conquests having been abandoned, and the weak state of the garrison at Bombay, of which Mhaderao was fully informed, left that chieftain free from any apprehension as to the Company's power being exerted to his prejudice. These circumstances, together with a large sum of money paid him by Hyder, and the pressing entreaty of the Nizam (notwithstanding the solemn engagements of

* Letter to the Court, 16th November 1768.

1768. MADRAS. of the latter to the Company), that he would join Hyder, led to the conclusion of a treaty between Mhaderao and the Nizam; by which, the latter, in lieu of the forts of Autoor, Nagore, and Dowlatabad, made over to him by Ragobah, was to receive the forts of Ausem and Bodamy, with a jaghire of twelve lacs of rupees, to be paid out of the country of Darood, to make up the difference of the revenues arising from the forts which he ceded: he agreeing to join the Mahrattas in assisting Hyder against the Company and the Nabob. At the date of this transaction (2d December 1768), the following letter was received by the Council of Madras from Mhaderao:

"As the firmness and strength of your friendship is known to every one to be superior in those respects *even to the wall of Alexander*, it is needless to pretend to enter into any discussions of it. In consideration thereof, I have sent my Vakeel, who will advise you of some matters which I have entrusted to him."

Mutiny at Coimbatore.

On the 28th November, Hyder's troops forced the Guzelhetty pass: Captain Andrews, who commanded, was killed in the defence. A few days afterwards, the garrison of Coimbatore mutinied; they put to death both the commanding officer and paymaster, and then delivered up the fort to the enemy. This event created so great a panic in the other garrisons, that some were immediately abandoned, and the rest surrendered without

without opposition. On the 5th December, Colonel Lang took the command of the army, relieving Colonel Wood, who had been ordered to the Presidency, to explain the course he had pursued after Hyder's movement towards Ossour, the result of which had produced great despondency both in the troops and their commander. 1768. MADRAS.

Hyder repossessed himself of the several forts south of the valley, excepting Kistnagherry. He detached parties of his horse, plundering, burning, and laying waste the province of Trichinopoly and the southern countries. The fort of Trichinopoly was only saved by the arrival of Major Fitzgerald in the neighbourhood. The ravages committed by Hyder's horse were great, the want of cavalry rendering it utterly impossible to check them. In fact, the country as far north as Gingee was destroyed, some of the straggling parties advancing to Chingleput. During the whole of January, the forces under Major Fitzgerald were marching and countermarching, in order to watch, and if possible to stop, the progress of the enemy. Hyder's success.

On the 12th February, a correspondence was renewed with Hyder, on the subject of peace. In reply to a letter from Major Fitzgerald, he expressed a desire to terminate the war, and that an officer might be sent, to whom he could open his mind, promising at the same time to put an end to the ravages committed by his horse. Major 1769.

1769. MADRAS. Fitzgerald deputed Captain Brooke, who, by Hyder's permission, took down in writing the conversation that passed, which led the Council to believe that he was really inclined to come to terms.* A proposition was made, on the part of the Council, for a truce of forty days; Hyder would only consent to twelve days. The terms he prescribed being inadmissible, preparations were made to watch his motions. He was at this time in communication with M. Law, at Pondicherry, which the French were busy in fortifying, under pretence of security against the Native powers. The following copy of a letter from Hyder to M. Law was discovered:—"It is a long time since I had the pleasure of receiving any letters from you advising of your health, the news of these parts, and that of the French in Europe. Considering the friendship and regard which the French Company and the sirdars of their king in Europe bear to me, I am very glad to hear of the increase of their happiness and power, also of your health. You have, doubtless, heard from others the repeated victories which, by the blessing of God, have attended the Circar's troops; also the defeat of the English, and my laying waste the Trichinopoly, Arcot, &c. countries. My victorious armies are now gone towards Madras, near to which place they will proceed; when you will certainly

Hyder corresponds with M. Law.

* Madras Consultations, January 1769.

certainly send to me a person of distinction, to inform me as well of certain affairs of your country of Europe as these parts; and till then, be constant in writing me very particular letters, advising of the above matters, the situation of affairs in Europe, the English sea-ports and their sirdars; all which will be the means of increasing our friendship and regard. From Shah Mahomed, a servant of my court, whom I now send, you will be informed of my friendship. What can I say more?"* 1769. MADRAS.

Want of cavalry and money.

Experience having shewn, that it was impossible to obtain any decisive advantage without a body of horse, a communication took place with the Nabob of the Carnatic as to the best means of procuring that species of force. The distress of the Council was so great for want of money, that a stop was put to the investment on the coast, all further advances being interdicted: notwithstanding these extreme measures for relief, they stated that, they "knew not where to find resources for carrying on the war for more than four months longer." They applied to the King of Tanjore for a body of cavalry; but Hyder had already despatched part of his force to the frontiers of Tanjore, and obliged the king to pay a sum of money, and to furnish a quantity of provisions, to save his country from being laid waste. It being impossible to bring the war to a conclusion without

* Country Correspondence, 1769.

1769. MADRAS. out cavalry, Morarirow engaged to complete his horse to three thousand; the Nabob was to furnish four thousand more, which, with the fifteen hundred he already possessed, and about five hundred the Polygars could supply, would form on the whole a respectable body.

Causes of protracted war. The Council ascribed the protraction of the war to the three following causes: a divided power—the want of cavalry—and the want of money. They remarked, that the forces in the field were under the Company's servants, but the means of maintaining them were principally obtained from the Nabob, who was very jealous of control, especially since our attainment of the Dewanny in Bengal, which led him to infer that the same result would follow at Madras. They did not hesitate to declare their opinion, that either the whole management of the Carnatic must remain in his hands or that of the Company; and that if the revenues of the Carnatic were free and unencumbered, they might well afford to maintain a respectable body of cavalry, besides one of infantry; but under the existing embarrassments of the Nabob, it appeared to be impracticable. As to money, they had never been able to calculate a reasonable dependence on more than could meet three or four months of ordinary charges. The Nabob, at length perceiving his danger, and the indispensable necessity of a body of cavalry, engaged to procure both the cavalry and the means.

means.* Great doubts were entertained as to his fulfilling his engagement; had not large supplies been furnished from Bengal, the affairs at Madras must long before have sunk under the burthen. These considerations led the Council to urge the expediency of a sum being always reserved at each of the presidencies to meet the extraordinary charges of war, in case the ordinary revenues should fail.† The incursions of Hyder determined the Council to fortify the Black Town, for which purpose a contract was entered into with Mr. Paul Benfield, in March. 1769. MADRAS.

Hyder, finding himself much pressed by the force under Colonel Smith, near Chingleput, returned suddenly to the southward, and on the 18th March, encamped on the Red Hills, near Pondicherry. Colonel Smith marched to Wandewash, where he was obliged to wait some days, to put his army in a condition to pursue the enemy.

On the 28th, the Council received intelligence from Chingleput, that Hyder's horse had appeared near that place, and at twelve at night, the signal agreed upon was made at the Mount. On the 29th, in the morning, several parties of horse appeared within the bounds of Madras, and it was ascertained from a spy, that Hyder, with more of his horse, but without guns or infantry, was Hyder advances to Madras.

* This measure was the foundation of that portion of the Carnatic debt commonly called the "Cavalry Loan."

† Letter, 8th March 1769.

1769. MADRAS. was on the other side of St. Thomé. About six o'clock in the evening, Hyder addressed a letter to the President on the subject of a peace:

Letter from Hyder. "After the arrival of Mr. Andrews, and the commencement of the negociation of peace, in person as well as by letter, a means of establishing a friendship between us took place. I therefore addressed a letter to you, by a camel-hircarrah, on the 13th March, in answer to one you sent me, and lay encamped near Balepore; when, Colonel Smith arriving near my army, by continual marches, with a design to attack me, I was under a necessity to move. Just at which time, I received your letter of the 17th, by the said camel-hircarrah, advising of your intention to send Mr. Andrews again to me, in a day or two; for which reason, I encamped within three or four coss of Cuddalore, in expectation of his arrival. The laying waste of that place would not have been so difficult a task; but still I declined it, out of regard to the friendship between us, as it would prejudice the trust that is usually put in sea-ports. Mr. Andrews, however, delaying his coming for some time, and Colonel Smith, notwithstanding the negociation of peace being on foot, again arriving within two or three coss of my army, with the same design as before, I immediately decamped; and with a view to settle a lasting peace, the soonest possible, am arrived at the Mount. My regard to our friendship, and the intercourse of letters

letters which has passed between us, made me decline coming to blows with the Colonel; and the same consideration has made me entirely forbid the burning the villages, and seizing the cattle: on which heads, I have given proper orders throughout my army. I now write this, therefore, to desire you will send to me Mr. Dupré, who is a wise sirdar and one of the councillors, and with whom, moreover, I have maintained a correspondence since the first arrival of Mr. Andrews. To him I shall impart my thoughts respecting the establishing a peace and sincere friendship between us, which, having fully understood, he may return and acquaint you with; in which case, that foundation of a lasting peace, which we are both desirous of, will be established. In case of any delay therein, I am not to be blamed: let me hope, therefore, that you will send the said gentleman with all possible expedition. Entertain no apprehensions whatever, but be pleased to send him with a contented heart. For further particulars relative to my friendship, I refer you to the said Nizamuddeen. May your happiness always increase!"* 1769. MADRAS.

The President replied to Hyder Ally Khan:—"By Nizamuddeen Ahamed, I have just now received your letter from the Mount, the friendly contents of which give me great pleasure, as you still express your good inclination to restore peace, and

* Country Correspondence, 1769.

1769. MADRAS. and desire that I will send Mr. Dupré to you for that purpose. That gentleman will set out from hence to-morrow morning early, to visit you; and I hope all our differences will soon be adjusted to our mutual satisfaction. I therefore desire, as an earnest of your good intentions, that you will order your people not to plunder the Company's villages, nor molest the people. If you will consent to this, I will empower Mr. Dupré to send a letter to Colonel Smith to halt at a proper distance."

Treaty signed. On the following morning, Mr. Dupré set out to join Hyder, with whom he continued the whole day, returning to the Presidency in the evening. The conference led to the conclusion of terms, and of a treaty, which was signed by Hyder on the 3d April. He announced his signing it in the following terms:—"I have the pleasure of your letter. Agreeably to your desire, I have put my seal to the treaty you sent. You will receive it by Mr. Stracy, to whom I beg leave to refer you for further particulars, as well as to the circumstances of Colonel Smith's movements to-day. May your happiness and joy ever last!"

It consisted of three articles. The contracting parties included the Rajah of Tanjore, the Malavar Ram Rajah, and Morarirow, who were described as friends and allies to the Carnatic Payan Gaut; also all other friends and allies of the contracting parties, provided they did not become aggressors against either of them; but if they became

came aggressors, they were not to be assisted by either.* 1769. MADRAS.

The cavalry raised by the Nabob during the war were delivered over to him, but at his request they were to be placed under the Company's officers.

Proposals for Council to join Nizam against Mahrattas.

Proposals were made to the Council, in May, that they should join the Nizam against the Mahrattas. The Council, in the event of the matter being pressed, determined to avail themselves of the clause in the late treaty, and likewise to declare that the situation of the Company's affairs did not admit of their affording the required assistance. In announcing their determination to the Court, they remarked: "Engagements and alliances with the powers of India must unavoidably expose us to perpetual dangers, troubles, and embarrassments; but it will be extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to figure in the character of an Indian potentate, and yet avoid the dangers and inconveniences of Indian alliances and connexions. The Company's possessions in the Carnatic are not such as would give them that character; but as possessors in part, and protectors of the whole, from Tinnevelly to Cuttack, they certainly are regarded in that light, and subject to all the inconvenience of it." †

After the treaty had been executed, Hyder insisted upon the release of all the Newaughts, and the

* Printed Treaties. † Letter to Court, 27th June 1769.

1769. MADRAS. the delivery of the stores in the fort of Colar. The Council, anticipating some further demands, consulted Colonel Smith as to the means of carrying on a war, should hostilities recommence. That officer declared that, considering the reduced condition of the troops, the distressed state of the country, and the inability of the Council to procure any certain pecuniary resources, there was no probability of their being able to prosecute a war with any prospect of success; that they were not in a position to insist upon more favourable terms, and that even a temporary respite was of great moment to the troops.

In consideration of these circumstances, and of the success of the enemy in the Tinnevelly country, owing to the combination of the Polygars in his favour, and the miserable defection of the Nabob's sepoys, who fled from every part on the appearance of the enemy, the demands of Hyder were acceded to.

Hyder shortly afterwards solicited the Council for a small body of troops, merely as a proof of the Company's connexion with him, to assist him with Janojee against Mhaderao. The Council referred him to the treaty, under which they declined acceding to his request, feeling that it would be unwarrantable to take part against Mhaderao.

On the termination of peace with Hyder, the Council brought before the Court the relation in which

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which the Company stood towards the Nabob of the Carnatic. They declared that the terms of the late peace had been imposed upon them by imperative necessity, to which they had acceded from a conviction, that the result would only prove less disadvantageous than a continuance of hostilities, with means wholly inadequate to their vigorous prosecution.

Embassy's views of the Nabob of the Carnatic.

Had the negociation with Hyder related to the Company's interests alone, most of the difficulties which arose during the discussions would have been obviated. So far as the Company were concerned, Hyder was said to have evinced an earnest wish for peace and friendship; but had the Company observed a neutrality, and left the Nabob to protect his own country, the Carnatic would have fallen to the first invader. Although in this powerless condition to defend his territories, the Nabob possessed, in its fullest extent, the government of the country; the appointment of, and command over, the persons entrusted with the departments, and the entire disposal of its productions and revenues: on all points connected with the Carnatic, it was necessary that he should be consulted; in fact, nothing could be done without his concurrence. His desire had been to continue the war, notwithstanding the absolute want of all *matériel* for the purpose. The treachery of his sepoys, in surrendering every fort that was attacked; the extension of the cruel ravages

1769. MADRAS. ravages to which the country had been exposed; a rooted hatred to Hyder; a desire to extend his own possessions, and a belief in the Company's inexhaustible credit and resources in Bengal, supplied the motives by which he had been actuated. He never spoke of Hyder but as Hyder Naigue, although the Nizam and others had, as it suited them, used towards Hyder the title of Nabob. Hyder as resolutely refused to use the term Nabob of the Carnatic, but designated him Mahomed Ally, often accompanied with opprobrious terms. The Nabob absolutely declined being made a party to the treaty, as he would not submit to give Hyder the title of Nabob. The Council were, therefore, constrained to conclude and engage for the Carnatic.

The Nabob was desirous that the Company should disband their troops and retire within their possessions, leaving him to defend the rest of the Carnatic with his own means. The Council observed on the long friendship which had existed between the Company and the Nabob; their promises and engagements to support him and his family; the large debt which he owed to them; the probable detriment to these affairs, should the Carnatic fall into other hands; and the certainty of that event, if not prevented by the interposition of our power, were urged as reasons for employing the Company's troops whenever the country might be attacked. Arms, once taken up, could not

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not be laid down at pleasure; and although it might be nominally the Nabob's cause, it would, in point of fact, be that of the Company. From the first of his connexion with the Company, in 1746, to the reduction of Pondicherry, in 1761, the Carnatic had been a continued scene of war, in which the Nabob had been reduced to the greatest extremities. The revenues had been wholly inadequate to the expense of the wars up to 1761. Before any reductions could be introduced, the defection of Usoff Khan in the Madura country, and the subsequent hostilities with Hyder, had still further embarrassed his resources, besides the debts which he had contracted to individuals. The Council, therefore, solicited the Court's views as to the future course of policy to be observed towards him, as, after all, he depended solely upon the Company for support; as he had not a friend in the Nizam, the Mahrattas, Hyder, or the king of Tanjore. They stated, that they felt it necessary to put forward the facts; deductions from them being matter of opinion.

The Nabob was apprehensive, to the greatest degree, that, sooner or later, some pretence would be found by the Government to seize the Carnatic, and establish such a system as had been introduced in Bengal. Although the day was, in all probability, far distant, when he would be enabled to discharge his debts, and insist upon the Company

1769. MADRAS. Company evacuating his forts and country, the Council desired to possess the Court's opinion, in the event of such a state of things arising. The value of the Company's acquisitions, including the Circars and Jaghire, was estimated at about thirty-five to forty lacs; the Nabob's, between seventy and eighty: but this was not founded on any clear data.

The Directors communicated their sentiments on the treaty with Hyder, and the views of the Council, in a despatch to Madras, in March 1770:

"In your letter to the Nabob, dated 16th July 1767, you say, it has been your intention, ever since 1761, to embrace the first favourable opportunity of securing the several passes into the Carnatic. That you then had a favourable opportunity, because the Mahrattas had already struck a terror into Hyder's forces; therefore, you urged the Nabob to exert his utmost to get this accomplished. You afterwards promised him the government of the Mysore country. Your field deputies pompously appointed him phousedar thereof; and then you accuse him of having an *insatiable desire of extending his dominions.* He finds himself, by following your advice, reduced, disappointed, and almost despised; and then you blame him for want of temper.

"You have attempted to explain away the value

value of almost every thing for which you have ventured to plunge us into a war with a view to obtain. To such a degree of irresolution and disability had your ill-conduct of the war reduced you, that necessity obliged you, at last, to give Mr. Andrews, in his instructions to treat with Hyder, a very extraordinary *carte blanche*, nearly to this effect: 'If Hyder will not relinquish places taken, we must relinquish pretensions thereto.' 1769. MADRAS.

"You say the Nabob has the Bengal transactions always in his mind:—we wonder not at it. You have, contrary to our express injunctions, afforded but too much reason for all the country powers around you to suspect us of encroaching designs against their possessions and tranquillity, and gained no one advantage thereby.

"In the first article of your treaty with Hyder, you include, in general words, *all the friends and allies of the contracting parties*, 'provided they do not become aggressors;' but if they become aggressors, they lose the benefit of such treaty.

"Now as, by the treaty with the Soubah, Bazalet Jung is prohibited expressly, at any time, from yielding Hyder the common formal civilities necessarily practised by country powers who are at peace with each other, we cannot conceive how Bazalet Jung can fulfil the condition by which he holds his circar, and yet continue on good terms with Hyder, as all our allies must do, if they act

1769. MADRAS. conformably to the first article of your treaty with him.

"By your letter to the President and Council of Bengal, 21st March last, and their reply thereto, of the 31st of the same month, we find a plan has been concerted between you, for establishing a fund for military resources, by a reduction of the investments on which we had so much reason to depend. However salutary it might be to provide against future exigencies, after your investments shall have been carried to their full extent, yet it is with the utmost astonishment we see that our servants (apprised, as they are, of the obligation the Company is under to pay £400,000 annually to Government, exclusive of the indemnity for tea, which may be estimated at near £200,000) could entertain an idea of depriving us of the only means we could have to discharge the same, together with such dividends as the Proprietors might reasonably expect from our late acquisitions, and at the same time enable us to provide for the payment of bills of exchange, or our common and necessary consignments, and the other important occasions which must indispensably be complied with."

Circars taken under Company's management.

As the term for which the Circars had been let to Hussain Ally and Joquey Pundit expired in the ensuing September, the Council resolved upon taking the whole under the Company's management, and to settle with the Zemindars for their jumma-

jummabundy. When originally let to Hussain Ally, two only of the four Circars had acknowledged the Company's authority; and the Zemindars of those two, notwithstanding their assurances of fidelity and attachment, were ready to seize every opportunity to distress a government, to which they only submitted through fear. By the plan proposed, a competent knowledge of their mean value would be obtained, though the expenses of collecting the revenues might render it less advantageous for a time. The distinction between zemindarry and government lands was first pointed out. "The zemindarries are lands held by certain rajahs or chiefs as their hereditary estates, paying a certain tribute to the Government, and being subject to suit and service, in manner very similar to the ancient feudal tenures. The tributes ought to be certain and invariable, though that has not always been strictly observed, and changes in government have also introduced changes in the tributes; which, indeed, is of no great consequence, for, besides these fixed tributes (supposing they were so), the Supreme Government has always demanded, and custom has given sanction and title to, a further sum as a *nazar*, or free gift; and these two sums, the tribute and *nazar*, are what we mean when we speak of settling the *jummabundy* with the Zemindars. Besides these zemindarries, or hereditary estates, there are certain lands (more in the Chicacole than any

1769. MADRAS.

Zemindarry and Government lands described.

1769. MADRAS.

other of the Circars), which are called *havely*, or Government lands, and are the property of the state, or lord paramount. Such are your *jagueer*, &c. lands, in the Carnatic; and these are the lands which we purpose to let out, even should we, by way of trial, endeavour to settle ourselves the *jummabundy* with the Zemindars for their lands."*

Litigious and violent proceedings of the Grand Jury.

The introduction of English law had, at this early period, been productive, as in later times, of much inconvenience and annoyance to the Government as well as to the natives. At a moment when the Company's affairs on the coast demanded the utmost attention of the Council; when the whole of the country from Tinnevelly to the Kistna was involved in troubles, and when the enemy were ravaging the Carnatic, the Council were harassed by the violent and litigious proceedings of some members of the Grand Jury, who obstinately persevered in pressing matters and presentments, which threw the settlement into contentions and embarrasments; whilst on other occasions they declined to make a return to any of the bills of indictment brought before them.

The jurisdiction of the Mayor's Court, under the charter, became matter of doubt and dispute; the one party construing the word *factory* in the most extensive latitude, the other taking it in its literal and strict sense.

"If,"

* Letter from Fort St. George, 27th June, 1769.

1769. MADRAS.

"If," observed the Council, "the charter should be understood in the extended sense, including not only all the old districts, but the newly-acquired jaghire and all the circars, and, consequently, that we should be required to govern and manage these countries according to the laws of England, we hope your honours will pardon us if we frankly confess, that we are utterly unable to undertake such a task. It would be introductive of more disorder and confusion than we can now describe: but, as we do not think that the charter can, by any natural construction, be extended thus far, we have only to hope that it may be understood not to extend beyond the places actually named without dependencies; that is to say, Madraspatnam, or the Black Town, and Fort St. George, or the White Town, and so of every other factory. We are of opinion that, whether the Company hold their possessions by one tenure or another, it was never intended by the grants, to abolish the usages and customs of the people, or the forms of administering justice."

The whole subject was referred by the Directors to the consideration of counsel, who, after entering very fully into the various points, stated:—

Counsel's opinion on conduct of the Grand Jury.

"I have no doubt that the charter of justice does not extend to any territories or places acquired since that charter was granted; consequently, the Presidency of Madras may be relieved from their apprehensions, that the jaghire lands are

1769. MADRAS. are within their jurisdiction. The extent of their power seems to be very exactly described in the forty-fifth paragraph of their general letter.

"If any of the Grand Jury had complained to the court of their fellows for refusing to go on with their business, and nothing had appeared to justify such refusal but what is said by the three memorialists in the court, it was the duty of the judges to set fines upon them, and commit them until the fines were paid. The court have also a power of fining those who refuse to attend the juries, who are liable to be called upon after they have been legally summoned: but fines are at the discretion of the judges, and in such cases £30 has been set. Nothing can be more illegal or insolent than the address of the Grand Jury to the justices of Oyer and Terminer, 26th April 1769; there was no punishment in the power of the court they did not deserve. But when a grand jury is dismissed for misbehaviour, and another summoned in its stead, the second is not to consist of any part of the first jury so dismissed; and the taking a larger number at first into grand juries will prevent this inconvenience.

"It is proper I should make some observations on the memorial sent to the Court of Directors, and the conduct of the memorialists. They, after they had found one bill of indictment, stopped short in the business, because they apprehended they were not qualified to act, the court, in their opinion,

opinion, having illegally dismissed a former jury. It is impossible to conceive a circumstance more foreign to their province as jurymen, or the business then before them. With equal propriety, they might have dated their disqualification from some misconduct in the Nabob of Arcot. It is again to be observed, that these gentlemen had been sworn on the Grand Jury, and as such had found an indictment. They imputed, and by their memorial impute, the interruption thus given to the public justice of the country, to the feelings and dictates of their conscience, and could not by virtue of their oaths as jurymen (though with the same breath they declare themselves not qualified as jurymen) give any reason for their conduct. How this explosion was felt at Madras, I know not; but sure I am, that if it had burst in the King's Bench in this country, these gentlemen would not have been permitted to plead conscience for their outrage. If these feelings of conscience are real and genuine, the owners of such consciences are, indeed, disqualified for every important connexion with public society, as they have not the least power and control over themselves. Could it be imagined, that assisting in the administration of justice could offend the most tender conscience? Can any employment be more innocent or honourable? Against such qualms, so sudden, so unexpected, and so destructive in their operations, human foresight has no

1769. MADRAS.

1769. MADRAS. no protection. But if, on the other hand, these feelings of conscience are not sincere or genuine, but are only used as a cover, under which resentment, detraction, and malice conceal themselves, the owners of such consciences are the pest of all public society."

The Court dismissed three of their civil servants and one military servant, who had been principally concerned, and were parties to the memorial, leaving it to the Council to restore either or all, provided their conduct, in the intermediate period of the complaint, and the receipt of the Court's order, had proved entirely satisfactory to the Council.

Conduct of the French. The French were at this period busily engaged in fortifying Pondicherry, under the pretence of security from the country powers. Two of their transports had gone to the Cape for provisions, after having been at the Mauritius, full of men and warlike stores. They had also made a settlement on the eastern coast of Madagascar for the better accommodation of their troops.*

1768. BOMBAY. Operations against Hyder on coast of Malabar. The armament sent from Bombay against Hyder's possessions on the Malabar coast, in the month of February, has already been noticed.† That expedition consisted of five hundred Europeans and eight hundred sepoys, under the command

* Letter from the Council, 26th June, 1769.

† *Vide* page 230.

mand of Major Gowin, the marine force being placed under Mr. Watson, to whom was added Mr. Sibbald, long resident at Onore, for the purpose of forming a committee to conduct any negociation that might arise during the service. 1768. BOMBAY.

Mangalore, Onore, and Fortified Island, had been successively captured in the month of March. On the 9th of May, a considerable body of Hyder's forces were reported to be within a short distance of Mangalore, commanded by the Nabob in person. They were shortly afterwards discovered posted on the hills, and bringing up their cannon with elephants and oxen; their number amounted to six or eight thousand foot, and four thousand horse. Captain Boyé, who commanded at the fort, was consulted, and joined with the Committee in opinion that the fort was untenable; that any attempt to attack the enemy in the field would be fruitless and unsuccessful, and that measures should, therefore, be concerted for withdrawing the troops. Arrangements were accordingly made for that purpose; but from great mismanagement in bringing up the boats, and the the irregularity and precipitancy with which the troops advanced to embark, one lieutenant, two ensigns, eighty-four Europeans, and one hundred and sixty-two sepoys, were either killed or fell into the hands of the enemy. Company's troops abandon Mangalore.

The Council considered the whole transaction to call for strict investigation. They ordered a general

1768. BOMBAY. general court-martial to assemble in November, for the trial of the officers, who had given their opinion to the council of war assembled at Mangalore that the place should be evacuated, and also for the irregular and disgraceful manner of conducting the evacuation, in leaving the sick and wounded to the mercy of the enemy. The finding of the Court led to the dismissal of several of the officers from the service.

Several officers dismissed.

The treaty concluded with Hyder, by the Council at Madras, was not deemed conclusive as regarded Bombay. A vakeel reached the latter Presidency from Hyder, on the 3d November, desiring that two members of the Board might be appointed to treat with him: Messrs. Church and Sibbald were accordingly nominated for that purpose. After protracted negociations, a treaty was agreed upon, in the month of August, consisting of thirteen articles. The Company were allowed to build a fort at Onore, and to have the sole right of of purchasing pepper in the Nabob's dominions. The amount, or as much of it as the Company chose, was to be made good in guns, muskets, saltpetre, lead, and gunpowder, and the balance in ready money; the Company were to export from Mangalore what rice they might want; to cut and purchase timber at Onore, and to be exempt from anchorage-dues; the Nabob was not to assist the enemies of the English, nor the English the enemies of the Nabob.

Treaty with Hyder and Presidency of Bombay.

The

The Court disapproved of the article of the treaty, which related to the supply of warlike stores to Hyder; as it not only enabled him to strengthen his own power, but led to the belief that Mhaderao, with whom the Court were anxious to preserve a strict neutrality, might take umbrage at the condition, which permitted Hyder to add to his military means. 1768. BOMBAY.

CHAPTER VI.

1765-69. Attention of Parliament directed to the Company's affairs.

To preserve a correct narrative of the proceedings of Parliament, in connection with those of the Company and of their governments abroad, reference must now be had to the acts of the Legislature, immediately following the acquisition of the Dewanny in 1765.*

Intelligence of that event reached the General Court during its meeting on the 18th June 1766. After the despatches had been read, a motion was made to increase the dividend from 6 to 8 per cent. The Court of Directors were opposed to the motion; they represented that, although the advantage of the new acquisition was undoubtedly important, yet the expenses incurred in the extended military operations that had been carried on, had entailed on the Company a large and heavy expense, and they recommended, that before any increase was made on the ground of the supposed enlarged profits, they should first discharge their incumbrances. The unanimous opinion of the Directors led to the withdrawal of the motion at that meeting, but a similar proposition was

* *Vide* page 146.

was renewed and carried on the 26th September, notwithstanding a report from the Directors to the Proprietors strongly urged the prudence of abstaining from the measure. On the following day the House of Commons called for a copy of the proceedings. At this time a negociation was pending with His Majesty's Government for a general arrangement of the Company's affairs. Parliament determined, before entering upon the more extended subject, to pass a law forthwith for regulating the dividend. The bill brought in provided against the declaration of a dividend but by the ballot, and that seven days' notice should be given before such ballot took place. In May 1767, the Proprietors determined to petition against the bill; the Court of Directors were strongly opposed to this course, whereupon the General Court demanded a ballot to decide the question, and that it should take place instanter. The votes were accordingly taken between the hours of eight and eleven in the evening, the majority being in favour of the petition against the bill for regulating the dividend. So far however from the Proprietors obtaining their object, the House of Commons called for a copy of their further proceedings, and passed two Acts, the one prescribing the mode in which a declaration of dividend should be made; the other limiting the power of voting at the ballot to Proprietors who should have had their stock six months, and also providing

1766.

1767.

1767. providing that no ballot, on any question, should be begun within a less space of time than eight hours after the adjournment of the General Court in which the question might be proposed, and that in no case should the ballot commence at a later hour than twelve at noon, nor close earlier than six in the afternoon.*

The regulation regarding the qualification of a proprietor to vote arose out of the mischievous practice which had prevailed of splitting large quantities of stock into sums of £500, (the then only qualification) by which separate and temporary conveyances were made. Thus dividends were declared, Directors elected, and important questions regarding India decided, under the existence of a practice subversive of every principle upon which the General Court was constituted, and which, if continued, would have left the permanent interest of the Company liable to be sacrificed to the partial and interested views of the few and perhaps temporary proprietors.

These legislative measures were followed by further and more important proceedings regarding the Company.

In the month of September the Court of Directors received an intimation from the first Lord of the Treasury that it was most probable the Company's affairs would engage the attention of Parliament

* Act 7 Geo. 3, cap. 48 and 49.

liament in the ensuing session. A committee was accordingly appointed in November, who called for the Company's charters, their treaties with and grants from the country powers, together with all their letters from their servants and agents in India, and also a statement of their revenues. Lengthened discussions took place—the question of the right of the Crown to the territories acquired by the Company was felt to be of too much importance to be lightly touched upon, and the Minister* declared fully against the trial of such a right in the House of Commons. 1767.

The Company having petitioned Parliament, and submitted proposals for an agreement, the same were acceded to, an Act being passed by which the Company were to pay £400,000 a-year to the public, and to export a given value of British produce.†

This agreement was renewed in 1769 for the term of five years.‡ At that period a general state of the Company's affairs; the contents of the dispatches received from the three Presidencies, which announced the deputation to Shuja Dowla, in Bengal; the prosecution of the war on the coast against Hyder, and the mission of Mr. Brome from Bombay to Poonah, were communicated to the Proprietors. They were also acquainted with, and fully 1769.

* Lord North. † 7 Geo. 3, cap. 57.
‡ 9 Geo. 3, cap. 24.

1769. fully concurred in, the determination adopted by the Directors, to send out a special commission, composed of three gentlemen of ability and experience (Henry Vansittart, Luke Scrafton, and Francis Forde, Esqrs.), to superintend all the presidencies and settlements, with full power to correct all abuses, and to dismiss or suspend such servants as might appear to have been concerned in such proceedings. They also resolved, that the Directors should apply to the Crown for naval aid in India.

Government propose to arm the King's naval officer with powers of a plenipotentiary.

Application was accordingly made to His Majesty's Government, but they were not disposed to grant a naval force, unless its commander was invested with powers, as plenipotentiary, for treating with Hyder Ally, the Mahrattas, &c. The Company were averse to arming him with such powers. Government were still of opinion that they should be conceded; but subsequently suggested that they might be confined to his having a voice on all questions connected with peace and war. The objections of the Directors and Proprietors to this modification not being removed, it was urged by Government, that the commission proposed to be sent out by the Company was illegal; and, moreover, that his Majesty could not consent to permit his forces to be subject to possible employment, contrary to the engagement by treaty, to acknowledge the legal titles of the Soubah of the Deccan and Nabob of the Carnatic.

Lord

Lord Weymouth, who conveyed such intimation to the Directors, desired that the sense of the General Court should be taken upon it. On the 15th of August, the day appointed for the General Court, another letter was read from his Lordship, in which he recapitulated the object contemplated in his former communication, and concluded by stating that, "The difficulty of a sole plenipotentiary, if ever it existed, is removed: the Crown does not desire to interfere with the powers of the commission; wants no authority over your servants, nor any direction or inspection of your commercial affairs; disclaims even a recommendation of any person to be employed in it; in short, only wishes to be enabled to assist you effectually; and, in order to that, finds it necessary to have a share in the deliberations and resolutions of the Company, merely with regard to the two objects of peace and war, when his Majesty's forces are to be employed." 1769.

The proposed commission was declared by the Attorney-general and the Company's counsel to be free from any legal objections. The question of giving a voice to the naval commander-in-chief, in discussions as to peace and war, was considered in successive General Courts, and finally rejected on the 13th of September.

Sir John Lindsay was nominated commander-in-chief of the King's ships in India; he was likewise appointed by the Company to take the command

Sir John Lindsay appointed to command King's ships in India.

1769. mand of all their vessels of war in the Indian seas, and to treat and settle matters in the Persian Gulf. The commissioners were permitted to embark on board his Majesty's frigate *Aurora*. Although no official intimation was received of any King's ship being ordered to India, it appears that two frigates, of which the *Anson* was one, were dispatched for that station.

1770. The *Stag*, ship of war, reached Anjengo, with Sir John Lindsay, in February, the *Aurora*, with the commissioners, had left the Cape in December preceding, but no tidings having been received of her in India in the month of September, the Council apprehended that some fatal accident had befallen her.* They, therefore, determined to despatch the *Lapwing* to England in September, by which conveyance they announced to the Court that, in consequence of the non-arrival of the commissioners, they had resolved to carry into effect the Court's orders of June, 1769, on the subject of the Dewanny revenue.

Revenue system opened. The Select Committee contended, that the power of acting was vested in them; but the Council at large considered that, as the Court's orders

* No intelligence was received of the *Aurora*, or her passengers, after quitting England. In March 1772, a motion was made in the House of Commons for a new writ for Reading in the room of Mr. Vansittart. The house refused to grant this writ, several cases being cited where members having been absent four years had returned.

orders were directed to the Supervisors, and not to the Board or the Select Committee, if they were to be taken up, it should be by the President and Council at large. Councils of Revenue were accordingly appointed at Moorshedabad and Patna. Their instructions were framed in conformity with the Court's orders of June, 1769, and may be considered as the introduction of the Company's revenue system. The Court observed:— 1770. BENGAL.

Court's orders as to the revenue management.

"We have attended to the several informations and proceedings on the subject of the revenues; and from the result of our observations, we see reason to flatter ourselves that, with care and industry, great improvements may be made in the Dewannee collections. We find the revenues of the Calcutta lands, as well as of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong, have been considerably augmented: and this increase gives us a sensible pleasure, because we perceive the number of inhabitants has increased at the same time, which we regard as a proof that they have found in those provinces a better security of their property, and relief from oppressions; and it is with particular satisfaction we can attribute these advantages to their being more immediately under the Company's management, and under the constant and minute direction of our covenanted servants. The like abuses, which have been corrected in these districts, are still severely felt through all the provinces of Bengal and Bahar, where the

1770. BENGAL. numerous tribes of Foujedars, Aumils, Sirdars, &c. practise all the various modes of oppression, which have been in use so long as the Moorish government has subsisted. To correct abuses of so long a growth will require much time and industry, and, above all, a patient and moderate exertion of the powers vested in us by the grant of the Dewannee: for we do not mean, by any violent and sudden reform, to change the constitution, but to remove the evil by degrees, by reducing that immense number of idle sycophants, who, for their own emolument and that of their principals, are placed between the tenant and the public treasury, and of which every one must get his share of plunder, the whole mass of which must amount to a most enormous sum.

"Our intention is to proceed in this work, without taking off from any of those profits and emoluments which have usually accrued to the Zemindars, who have inherited lands from their ancestors, much less to add any thing to the rents to be collected from the tenants; on the contrary, we mean to better the condition, both of the one and the other, by relieving them from many oppressions which they now labour under.

"But a plan of reformation of so extensive a nature cannot be effected by one man; it must be the constant attention of many; and for this purpose we have resolved to establish a committee of

of some of our ablest servants, for the management of the Dewannee revenues, at Muxadavad for the Bengal province, and at Patna for that of Bahar. 1770. BENGAL.

"The gentlemen to be so appointed shall be comptrollers for the management of the Dewannee revenues under your direction, and they are to have so many other of our junior covenanted servants for assistants, as from time to time may be found necessary to be sent into the several provinces, to correct abuses and maintain the intended reformation.

"The object of this council must be, first, to inform themselves of the real state of the collections in every part: that is to say, what rents are at this time actually paid by the tenants, and what was paid formerly; what is the nature of the cultivation, and what the chief produce of each district, and whether, in that respect, there seems a prospect of improvement. They are next to inform themselves of the amount of the charges of collection for some years past, in as particular a manner as possible; and you are then to judge how many of the Aumils and other officers, among whom those immense sums have been divided, may be spared. This saving, as far as it can reasonably be carried, at the same time that it will be a profit to the Company in point of revenue, will likewise be a relief to the tenant: for it cannot be doubted but that these numerous instruments

1770. BENGAL. instruments of power lay the inhabitants under contribution in various secret ways, over and above what appears upon the face of the accounts.

"In this reformation, you are to proceed with a moderate, steady, and persevering spirit of inquiry, looking rather to the prevention of frauds for the future, than the punishment of those offences which have already passed, and which, if not justified, are at least much palliated, by the immemorial custom of the Moorish government.

"The councils so to be appointed at Moorshedabad and Patna are to have the control of all the business relating to the revenue; but Mahmud Reza Cawn, or some other principal person of the country, must be appointed Naib Dewan for the Bengal province (that is, the Company's deputy), and all the business must be carried on through the Naib, and under his seal and signing; and, in like manner, Shitab Roy, or some other principal person, at Patna, for the Bahar provinces.

"The Council of Revenue are to sit daily, or as often as may be necessary for the most minute attention to this important branch of business. The Naib is to give his advice and opinion of the measures necessary to be taken, the officers and collectors requisite to be sent to the different districts, and the orders and powers to be given them; but the council are to consider and determine the whole, and no appointments are to be made, nor the Naib's seal put to any orders, without

out their approbation; and copies of all such orders and appointments are to be entered upon their diary, or a book apart, and to be transmitted regularly to England. 1770. BENGAL.

"We have said, in a former part of this letter, that we have no view to prejudice the rights of the Zemindars, who hold certain districts by inheritance; but when any of these die without heirs, the lands are to be let for a term of years, and upon such conditions as may encourage improvements in the cultivation. In like manner, where lands lie waste, you should propose terms for settling them, giving the undertakers every advantage possible, to enable them to proceed in a work so beneficial to the community in general, and yielding to the Company, in process of time, a certain increase of revenue.

"Before we close this subject, we cannot help remarking, that there seems to us to be great danger and impropriety, in having the powers of revenue and the powers of justice in one and the same person, which seems to be the case in the officers of the Foujedary, and, as we apprehend, in most other of the public offices of the several districts. This will be an object worthy of further inquiry; and if the case is as it appears to us, those powers should be separated and distinct lines drawn." Separation of judicial and revenue powers.

These instructions, far from evincing a spirit of rapacity, appear to have been framed with an anxious

1770. BENGAL.

anxious desire to acquire the fullest information on the state of the revenue, and to act under it with the utmost consideration towards the natives: most especially in separating the executive and legislative power which had been vested in the hands of one individual.

Mahrattas and Jauts.

The Mahrattas had constrained the chiefs of the Jauts to come to a settlement, by paying sixty-five lacs at given periods, besides an annual tribute of fifteen lacs, or a cession of lands to that value.* They then advanced and took possession of Etawah. Two of their detachments entered the province of Corah, seized the town of Bettoor, and laid claim to part of the Vizier's dominions, waving, for the moment, the conquest of Delhi.

Measures of Council.

These aggressions constrained the Council to depart from the principle which they had adopted of non-interference. The dominions guaranteed to the King and Vizier had been attacked or laid claim to by the Company's most formidable enemies. In accordance, therefore, with the treaty, and without waiting for a requisition, the Council determined to give immediate assistance; they felt that delay would only increase the danger, and whatever aid ought to be extended, would prove infinitely more efficacious if promptly afforded. They felt that energetic

* *Vide* page 205.

getic measures on the part of the Company might infuse some degree of vigour into the timid councils of the King, and prevent the Vizier taking advantage of any of the events which frequently arise during a period of confusion, favouring the views of a man of enterprizing and ambitious spirit. The security of the Company's possessions was also involved in the determination. The force at Dinagepore was accordingly ordered to march to the banks of the Caramnassa, and the garrison at Allahabad to be reinforced, to ensure the safety of that fortress, in case of sudden attack during the absence of two of the King's battalions, which had marched from thence, at the requisition of his Majesty.

1770. BENGAL.

In the month of February, the Mahrattas raised the blockade of Furruckabad, and proceeded in separate bodies, with great rapidity, towards Delhi, of which city they took possession, together with several branches of the royal family. It appeared from incontestable proofs, that this step was adopted not only with the concurrence, but actually under the advice and recommendation, of the King himself, his Majesty subsequently admitting that he was prompted to suggest that course, in order to prevent their proclaiming the Shah-zada in his room. It soon became evident that the King's intention was to join the Mahrattas, in the hope that he should effect his long-cherished object of gaining his capital

Mahrattas take Delhi.

Project of the King.

1770. BENGAL. capital and being seated on the throne of his ancestors. It was apparent, that he would rather see his capital in the hands of the Mahrattas, than in those of either Zabta Cawn, son of Nujib-ud Dowla, or his Vizier. The latter, in communication with Sir Robert Barker, proposed that the Company's forces, with those of the King, and his own, should march without delay, and join the Rohillas and Patans, for the purpose of placing the King on the throne at Delhi. The Select Committee, although satisfied that the proposition could never be effected, concurred in it rather than appear to weaken the ties between the Company, the King, and the Vizier, as well as to preserve the King from falling into the hands of the Mahrattas. His Majesty at first acquiesced in the plan, but abandoned it shortly afterwards, and resolved to throw himself into the hands of the enemy. Sir Robert Barker endeavoured to dissuade his Majesty from pursuing such a step, and to induce him to join in the spirited measures apparently adopted by his Vizier for his restoration. It was likewise proposed, that he should send forward the royal standard, accompanied by one of the young princes, rather than undertake the project himself, until affairs appeared more favourable.

1771. The King, resolutely bent on carrying into effect his plan of proceeding to Delhi, disregarded all the arguments urged by Sir Robert Barker, who

who had pointed out to him the consequences which would probably ensue; and quitted Allahabad on the 15th April, for the purpose of joining the Mahrattas. 1771. BENGAL.

His Majesty's separation from the Company appeared unavoidable. Any act on the part of the Council, to restrain him, would have induced the Mahrattas to place the Shah-zada on the throne, and might also have irritated the King against the British interests. The Council, therefore, resolved, as a mark of gratitude and respect, that Sir Robert Barker should attend him to the frontier of his province, and pay him every mark of attention. The King felt very sensibly this demonstration, and, at his own request, was permitted to take with him the four three-pounder field-pieces attached to his troops. King joins the Mahrattas.

The Vizier, unable to effect any change in the mind of the King, felt it to be his duty to aid him, both with money and troops, in order to promote a measure which he could not prevent; but he, at the same time, manifested a due regard to his own interests: it being discovered that, in consideration of this aid, the King was to deliver over to him the fortress of Allahabad. The negociation for this object had been conducted so secretly, that the Council were not aware of it, until they received intelligence of the terms on which the cession had been made. This act, on the part of the King, was totally at variance with his professions

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sions towards the Company, and, at the same time, evinced the determination of the Vizier to avail himself of every opportunity for strengthening his own power. The Council instructed Sir Robert Barker to point out these facts to his Majesty, and to endeavour to obtain the almost impregnable fort of Chunagur for the Company, as a counterpoise to the cession made to the Vizier. The possession of this fortress, and the King's residence in the Lower Provinces, had been strongly urged on the attention of the Council by the Court in 1771 :*—"These, and such further arguments as shall appear most conducive to the end, will, we hope, prevail on the King to establish his residence at Rajah-mul, or Mongheer, or such other place, with the provinces, as may be thought most proper for the purpose, and most likely to preserve to us that influence which is so essential to the Company's welfare.

Court's views.

"The political interests of the Company make us no less solicitous to obtain from Shuja Dowla an exchange of the territories of Bulwunt Sing, for the provinces of Khorah and Allahabad, now held for the King, since by such an exchange our frontiers would be more easily defended, a greater influence would be preserved by us over the neighbouring powers, and we might possibly be relieved from the necessity of keeping up so large and

* Letter to Bengal, 10th April 1771.

and expensive a military establishment as we have at present in Bengal. 1771. BENGAL.

"We are not insensible to the difficulties which may oppose your negociations on this subject. These, however, we persuade ourselves, may, in time, be overcome, by a proper attention on the part of our servants, and by their availing themselves of the circumstances which may occur, either in the situation, desires, projects, temper, or wants of this prince; and we recommend to you, to lay hold of every opportunity which may offer for accomplishing, by a friendly negociation, so desirable an end.

"There is another object, of the most essential consequence, which calls for the utmost exertion of your abilities; we mean, the obtaining from Shuja Dowla the absolute cession to us of the fort of Chunagur.

"As we have experienced the strength of this fortress, and are sensible of the vast importance the possession of it would be to the Company, you must use your utmost endeavours to acquire, by friendly means, what could not be retained without violence; we, therefore, enjoin you not to leave unessayed any effort which prudence can suggest, for obtaining from Shuja Dowla, the cession of Chunagur Fort. But as our view is to acquire it by treaty, not by force, and considering also the situation, power, and influence of this Soubah, your negociations must be conducted with the greatest

1771. BENGAL. greatest caution and delicacy; and you must strive, by every fair and honourable means, to strengthen his friendship and engage his confidence; nevertheless, you must not abate of your attention to all his motions, nor forego any opportunity to impress him with an opinion of our activity and power.

"And here we take occasion to observe, that should we at any time obtain from him the cession of this fortress, you must not fail to keep in it a strong garrison of Europeans, under the command of an able and experienced officer, which possession would enable you to do; since the security, which our possessions would thereby receive, would admit of a reduction in our other garrisons.

"Sensible of the difficulties which opposed your endeavours to obtain the removal of M. Gentil from the court and councils of Shuja Dowla, we approve of the delicacy with which you have acted towards the Vizier, in your requisitions on this subject; but, as we cannot see a person of the abilities of M. Gentil (a natural enemy of this nation, as well as of the Company) continuing in possession of a power to promote the designs of France, and not be alarmed for the consequences of his influence at the Soubah's Court, you must, therefore, lay hold of the first favourable opportunity to renew your request to Shuja Dowla, to remove M. Gentil from his service."

The

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The King left in the hands of the Council two of the young princes, as the best pledge of his faith, and proceeded by slow marches through the Corah province. Sir Robert Barker attended him to within seven coss of its boundary, and on the 30th June had his final audience of leave. His Majesty gave the strongest assurances of friendship for the English nation, and of the grateful sense he entertained of the support and assistance they had at all times afforded him. The Council entreated his Majesty to be convinced of the attachment which they felt towards him, and of the readiness with which the Company would receive and protect him, should any reverse of fortune compel him once more to return to his provinces.*

The Vizier had formed an alliance with the Rohilla chief, Hafiz Rhamet, to guard against the Mahrattas, who threatened to deprive him of the Vizerat, unless he joined the King's standard at Shahjehanabad,† where his Majesty arrived on the 6th January, 1772. He had also encouraged Frenchmen to enter into his service: the model of a new fort, intended to be erected by him, having been prepared in a masterly manner by a French engineer. These steps were not to be considered as manifesting any doubt on his part of the sincerity of the English feeling towards him,

* Letter, 31st August, 1771. † Delhi.

1770. MADRAS. him, but as indicating an apprehension of the Mahratta power, which was, in some measure, participated in by the Council.

The Council at Madras advised the Court, that Mhaderao, the Mahratta chief, had expressed great dissatisfaction at the conclusion of the treaty with Hyder,* in August, 1769, as he had meditated an attack on the Mysore country, or on the Carnatic, in conjunction with Janojee, with whom he had come to terms. "Thus situated, amidst powers whose ambition will never suffer them to remain quiet, and whose interests lead them to disturb the peace of their neighbours, whenever their interest incites them to do so, it may easily be conceived how liable to interruption the peace in the Nabob's possessions must be." The Council stated that they expected to be pressed by each party for aid; but as the Court had drawn the line "which appeared most eligible," they determined to pursue the course pointed out, as far as possible.

Carnatic liable to irruptions.

Hyder seeks aid against the Mahrattas.

Hyder, in the month of December, urged the Council to assist him against the Mahrattas, and referred to the treaty of 1769 as the ground for such demand. The Council evaded compliance, asserting that they could not be called upon to assist him, when it appeared that he was the aggressor—his refusal of the *chout* being cited in proof

* *Vide* page 266.

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proof that such was the case. The inconvenience of the treaty now forcibly pressed itself upon the Council. They were glad to avail themselves of any plea, to avoid being involved in fresh expense and hostilities, whether as principals or allies, being in daily expectation of the arrival of the Supervisors, to whose decision they desired to leave the matter.

Mahrattas enter Mysore.

The Mahrattas entered Mysore in February. Hyder endeavoured to take post and secure the passes, to prevent their penetrating into the Biddenore country. At this juncture, a vakeel arrived from Mhaderao, and expressed to the Council a strong desire, on the part of his master, to cement the friendship between him and the Company, referring, at the same time, to the Nabob of Arcot with regard to other points. These proceedings of Mhaderao grew out of the mission of Mr. Brome to Poonah, already noticed.*. The Council felt embarrassed by the Mahratta chief referring to this circumstance. The mission of Mr. Brome had been resolved upon by the Council as a last resource, in the hope that some fortuitous event would set it aside. Such proved to be the case, as the treaty with the Mahrattas, the Nizam, and others, was concluded before the propositions with which Mr. Brome was entrusted, were made known. Still, the object of the mission became sufficiently

* *Vide* page 241.

1770. MADRAS. sufficiently public to authorize Mhaderao to claim, upon the ground of reciprocity, equal consideration at the hands of the Council. The latter felt themselves bound by the Court's orders, and admitted that, if it were practicable for them to remain passive spectators, and permit the native powers to exhaust each other, it was the most prudent course. They knew the Mahratta to be the most dangerous power; and that even the united forces of the Company and of Hyder would not reduce them, whilst it might lead to their making a conquest of the whole of Mysore, and thus establish, at the door of the Company's possessions, a more powerful foe than even Hyder. On the other hand, were they to join Hyder, they were aware that a more advantageous offer from his enemies would draw him off the next day.

Nabob desires, to join Mahrattas; supported by Sir John Lindsay.

The Nabob of Arcot was anxious to act with the Mahrattas. In this critical situation, the Council, desirous to avoid taking any part, assured Hyder's vakeel, that if they could not act with him, they would not act against him. The Soubah advanced to the banks of the Kistna, and there waited to see which party prevailed.

The non-arrival of the Supervisors, and the circumstances connected with the debts of the Nabob of the Carnatic, increased the difficulties of the Council, the Nabob's private creditors infusing into his mind an idea that they had power and influence to overrule the Court of Directors at home.

home. Their embarrassments were enhanced by the conduct of Sir John Lindsay, who, having arrived from Bombay, assumed, under what he considered to be plenipotentiary powers, a right to inquire into the conduct of the late war, and to hold direct communication with the Nabob. By this proceeding, the Council were not only placed at direct variance with his highness, but colour was given to the idea that there was a superior authority to the Company, to whom the Nabob could resort, as occasion or caprice might dispose him. Sir John Lindsay went so far as to require the Council to attend him when he proceeded to deliver the King's letter to the Nabob: he also desired them to furnish him with such papers and documents of the Company as he might see fit.

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Difference with Sir John Lindsay.

The Council determined to support the authority of government, and not to "degrade themselves" by being mere attendants on a functionary, of whose powers they were not satisfied. They felt that there was no medium. They observed, "we either must have delivered to him our papers and records, or not;—we must either have rendered him an account of our transactions, or not;—we must have admitted him to have shared in our deliberations, or not. There appeared to be no room for hesitation. We were charged with the Company's affairs—we had no instructions from our constituents. Their rights were attacked: we

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must either have supported, or basely surrendered them. Our fortunes may be at stake in the issue; but were our lives at equal hazard, we should, without a moment's hesitation, have taken the part we have taken. The die is cast; we must stand the issue." Such were the terms in which the Council announced their having declined to obey the unauthorized requisitions of Sir John Lindsay.

A mission more pregnant with danger to the Company's interests on the coast could not have been well devised.

Conduct of Court as to Sir John Lindsay.

The advices from Madras, which announced these differences with Sir John Lindsay, reached the Court of Directors, by the *Lapwing*, on the 22d of March 1771. On the 8th of April, they addressed the following letter to the Earl of Rochford, one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State:

Letter from Court to his Majesty's Minister, as to Sir John Lindsay.

"The late advices from India, brought by the *Lapwing*, are of so very interesting and alarming a nature, that we think ourselves indispensably obliged to lay the purport of them before his Majesty's Ministers, together with our sentiments on the present state of the East-India Company's affairs upon the coast of Coromandel, produced as we have reason to apprehend, from the exertion of powers which, till within a few days past, we could not have the least reason to conceive were ever delegated to Sir John Lindsay, in any quality he holds from his Majesty in the East-Indies.

Sir John Lindsay, my Lord, in express contradiction to the assurance given to the Company by his Majesty's Secretary of State, your Lordship's predecessor in office, has, under

under his hand, insisted that he has his Majesty's authority and plenipotentiary powers from the Crown, to execute any treaty with the *Princes of the country*, which may be judged necessary to preserve peace *in India*. 1770. MADRAS.

He has also, in like manner, insisted that his Majesty has been pleased to appoint him his minister, and to invest him with *plenipotentiary powers* to treat with the Princes of India. The first intelligence this Company received of their existence, was communicated to them by their Presidency of Madras, by advices which arrived so late as the 22d ultimo. If they appear alarming now, well might they be thought in the utmost degree perplexing and distressful to the Company's servants there, who are told by Sir John Lindsay, that he is commanded by the King to apply to the Governor and Council of that settlement for a full and succinct account of all their transactions with the Nabob since the Treaty of Paris (concluded near eight years before this requisition); that it is his Majesty's pleasure he should enquire, with the utmost care, into the causes of the late war with the Soubah of the Deccan and Hyder Ally, and the reason of its unfortunate consequences; and he, therefore, makes no doubt but they will, with the utmost alacrity, put him in possession of the original papers, or authenticated copies *of all their transactions* since the said Definitive Treaty, in order to enable him to render a faithful account thereof to the King; and that the wisdom of Government may co-operate with the prudence of the Company, to establish a lasting peace in India.

We beg leave to express our hopes, that our servants, in the situation and circumstances they found themselves, will stand fully excused in your Lordship's sight, as they do in ours, for not considering themselves warranted to comply with such a demand. At the same time, we must beg leave seriously to affirm, that the *promulgation* of the plenipotentiary powers,

1770. MADRAS. powers, claimed by Sir John Lindsay, must necessarily end in the total loss of authority and consequence to the Company in India, where all princes being despotic, they will never be brought to believe, that when the King of England delegates his power to a minister, the representatives of the East-India Company are entitled to any confidence, regard, or attention. Such, in truth, my Lord, are the consequences already, in no small degree, felt by this Company.

The Governor and Council of Madras, in their letters, affirm, that since the arrival of Sir John Lindsay, and the operation of his extraordinary powers, their influence is greatly diminished, and that the most fatal consequences to the Company are to be apprehended. It is our duty, as representatives of the East-India Company, concurring with our Presidency abroad in their sentiments, to lay before your Lordship our apprehensions also, that unless some speedy remedy be applied, the ruin of the Company, from the loss of their consequence, influence, and credit, will infallibly ensue."

Lord Rochford's reply was dated St. James's, 20th April 1771:

"In answer to your letter of the 8th instant, I must inform you, that the repeated complaints made by the Company of the mismanagement and disobedience of their servants in India, which caused them to desire from the Legislature more extensive powers for their coercion, and induced them to send out Supervisors invested with the highest authority, first suggested to his Majesty the expediency of giving his commission to a person of confidence, to procure the fullest information on the spot, of the manner in which affairs had been conducted in that country; the thorough knowledge of which the King could not but consider as a principal national

national concern, as well as of the greatest consequence to the interest of the Company. His Majesty was the more called upon, in this case, as his own honour, pledged for the performance of the engagements entered into by him in the last Definitive Treaty, was in the hands of the Company's servants carrying on the government in India. 1770. MADRAS.

His Majesty has reason to apprehend, that the Governor and Council of Madras gave themselves the first rise to the opinion of a contest between the King and the Company, by their improper reception of Sir John Lindsay, and their refusal to do the usual honours to the delivery of his Majesty's letter and presents; which opinion, if it should at first starting be worked up by the ignorance of the people of that country, and their ideas of despotism, into prejudices hurtful to the consequence and influence of the Company, cannot but be checked in a short time, by the positive instructions given to Sir John Lindsay to avoid, as far as possible, even the appearance of any dispute with the Company, which might produce the most unfortunate consequences in the present state of affairs.

The King, in his last letter to the Nabob, has been pleased to express his confidence in the Company, and his desire to connect them inseparably with that prince; and Sir Robert Harland, whom his Majesty has appointed to succeed to the commission of Sir John Lindsay, besides the particular orders given him to promote, as far as possible, a strict union between the Nabob and the servants of the Company, and to remove every suspicion of the Company's lying under the King's displeasure, received instructions to make the support of their importance and honour in the eyes of all the powers in India, a principal point of his attention.

I have received his Majesty's commands to repeat those instructions, and to guard against any mistake of the real extent

1770. MADRAS. extent and meaning of the powers given Sir Robert Harland, by conveying to him such an explanation of them as will leave no reason of apprehension to the Company; but on the contrary, will, whenever they shall be exerted, be a convincing proof of his Majesty's paternal care and regard for their interests, by shewing them to be the object of his protection and support."

Reasons for inserting proceedings at length.

It may be remarked, that a reference to matters of so remote a date might have been spared, as they have long ceased to possess the interest which belonged to them when the events occurred. The same remark will apply with equal force to all historical records. In tracing the chain of events which took place in the extension of our power in India, it cannot be uninteresting to many who have been associated in the administration of the affairs of that empire, to learn the difficulties with which the home authorities had to contend, and the course which they followed, in maintaining their rights, and in meeting those difficulties, before they became subject to the legislative control which was engrafted on their chartered privileges; and although that control circumscribed their powers, it so identified the interests of the State with those of the Company, that the latter were relieved from a recurrence of the embarrassments which they had experienced in early times from the want of aid in most critical and trying junctures.

Council dispute powers of General Coote.

The Council had injudiciously involved themselves in a dispute with Major-General Eyre Coote, who

who had been appointed commander-in-chief of the Company's forces, by the Court of Directors. A difference of opinion arose, as to the terms in which the General was to be announced in orders to the army, on assuming the command. 1770. MADRAS.

The Council proposed that the same terms should be used as on the occasion of General Lawrence's appointment: to this General Coote objected. The Council, impressed with the necessity of preserving the supremacy of the civil power, suggested, in order to obviate the greater evil, that in lieu of a general order being published, letters should be addressed to all the commanding officers, to make their returns to General Coote. The General would not consent to this; and he determined to remain in a private capacity, until he received the opinion of the Councils at the other presidencies.

As the remodelling the military establishment required that no time should be lost, Brigadier-General Smith was requested by the Council to take the command of the troops on the coast; but believing that General Coote intended very shortly to proceed to Bengal, he suggested that the order might be deferred until his departure. General Coote did not remain in India: he quitted Madras for Bombay, from whence he proceeded to Bussorah, and thence to England *viâ* Paris. The Court condemned, in strong terms, the conduct of the Council towards General Coote, who was requested

General Coote returns to England.

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quested to hold himself in readiness to return to India.

Rajah of Tanjore, and the Nabob of Arcot's claims on him.

The conduct of the Rajah of Tanjore had been animadverted upon by the Court of Directors, in consequence of his backwardness in joining the Company's forces with his horse, during the hostilities with Hyder, and, that when they did join, they had been of little or no use. The Rajah had received protection at the hands of the Company, and his country had enjoyed uninterrupted tranquillity; it was, therefore, considered unreasonable, that he should withhold all contribution towards the preservation of his possessions, which were very fruitful, affording abundant means for supplying the troops engaged in the defence of the Carnatic, an object in which he was deeply interested.* The Nabob had made strong representations to the Council, in support of his claims on the Rajah of Travancore, and the Court of Directors had enjoined the Council to give the Nabob every assistance, consistent with justice, in prosecuting them.

Correspondence of Hyder with Tanjore.

The Council were at this time apprised that a correspondence had been carried on between Hyder and the Rajah. The former had promised to obtain a remission of the *peshcush* due from the Rajah to the Nabob, in consideration of the assistance the Rajah had offered him. A communication

* Letter to Madras, 1769.

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tion was stated to have been made to the Nabob's vakeel from Hyder that, although it was not the intention of the English to afford him any assistance, he should nevertheless use his endeavours to obtain it. There was also reason to believe that Hyder was in correspondence with M. Law at Pondicherry.

Embarrassments of the Council.

In this state of affairs, the Council addressed the Court in the following terms:—"We are surrounded with difficulties, which we cannot, dare not, venture to explain or even suggest; but should our apprehensions not be completely verified, by the failure in any one instance, the whole might seem the effect of prejudice. The views of the ministry, such as they appear to us—the secret transactions between the Nabob and Sir John Lindsay—the fluctuating state of the Company's affairs—the prepossession in favour of the Nabob, which he knows full well, and even more, we believe, from private than public assurances—all these create doubts which, in better times, in all our difficulties and all our dangers, we should oppose with resolution, firmness, and perseverance, were we even but sure of support from the Court of Directors. With respect to ourselves personally, we consider our fate as sealed by our transactions with Sir John Lindsay and with General Coote. We are right, or we are wrong: there is no medium. But in regard to the Company, permit us to recommend some stable form of government

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ment and system, in which you may confide, and which you will support; for without a confidence, on the part of those whom you employ, that they will be supported, their measures never can have that firmness, spirit, and vigour, which are so essentially necessary to the prosperity of your affairs."

Court's views as to the conduct of the Council.

Before the answer of Lord Rochford to the Court's representation regarding Sir John Lindsay's conduct had been received by them, they addressed the Madras Council, approving of their conduct towards the Mahrattas and Hyder Ally. They expressed regret at the Nabob's differing in opinion with the Council, and trusted that they would find means to divert his mind from Mhaderao. They perceived with anxiety, that the affections of the Nabob, and his confidence in the Council, had been of late much weakened; they wished the Council to deliberate on the steps to be taken, with coolness and impartiality, and once being resolved, to act with vigour and effect; assuring them that being conscious of the purity of their intentions, they should receive the support of the Court.

In alluding to the war between Hyder Ally and the Mahrattas, the Court remarked, that the views of the Council were expressed in a strain of timidity and despondence, unsuited to the Company's real situation in India. They observed; "Fear begets weakness in council, and irresolution in action.

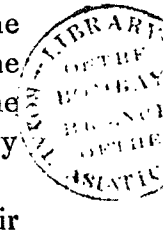
action. It is in a choice of difficulties, that greatness of mind finds an opportunity of distinguishing itself. Conscious of our own superiority and power in India, it seems to be our proper line of conduct to observe a steady and uniform neutrality, till such time as our own dignity and interest call upon us to interfere, and then a favourable moment should be seized." The Court did not perceive that the war carried the appearance of any immediate danger. They considered that the dissensions among the Indian powers could only serve to augment the influence of the Company, who, while they shewed their strength and kept it up, would be courted equally by all parties. The moment the Company adhered to any one party, they would make enemies of all the rest. It was the desire of the Court to fulfil, in the most scrupulous manner, all engagements with the Nabob; but viewing things in a more general light, it would certainly be of no consequence to the Company, who were masters of the Carnatic, provided it were kept out of the hands of their European rivals, the French. 1770. MADRAS.

They desired the Council to represent to the Nabob in the strongest, although in the most respectful terms, the injury he did himself, in endeavouring to create a difference between the King's and the Company's servants and in imagining a separation of interests, when, in the end, he would be convinced none could exist. Whatever trifling disputes

1770. MADRAS. disputes of form and ceremony might have arisen between them at the first, he would soon see that, in essentials, they must and would agree. The Company's connexion with the Nabob stood entirely on ancient friendship and reciprocal kindness: the Court wished to continue it on the same footing; but they observed, the Company could not be compelled to follow his projects when they appeared totally repugnant to our interests. So, on the other hand, the Nabob could not be forced into the Company's views, should they be disagreeable to him: all that was, therefore, left was to expostulate with him. He would determine for himself, and the Company for themselves. The dangers which threatened the Carnatic, from the Mahrattas, were more immediately the object of his concern than of the Company; and the joining Hyder Ally (even were it expedient), without the concurrence of the Nabob, would be a measure of perplexity, as it might lead to a situation where the different engagements of the Company clash, *viz.* that of supporting the Nabob by the Treaty of Paris, and of defending Hyder by the last treaty with him: engagements which it might also become impossible at the same time to fulfil.

With regard to Sir John Lindsay, the Court observed, that it did not become them to pronounce on his conduct, unacquainted as they were with the extent of his powers and the nature

ture of his instructions; but they had a right to judge of that of their own servants, and it was with pleasure they declared their perfect satisfaction in the general line of the Council's behaviour, and their acquiescence in every step they had taken for the support of their own dignity and the rights and privileges of the Company, which, the Court felt, "rested upon as high authority as the King's commission—Royal Charters, confirmed by repeated Acts of Parliament." 1770. MADRAS.



The Court, at the same time, expressed their persuasion, that the disagreements and disunion of councils, between the representative of the Crown and the servants of the Company, were altogether repugnant to his Majesty's gracious intentions. It was apparent from Lord Rochford's letter, that Sir John Lindsay had no authority to demand of the Council a succinct account of all their measures, or to be put in possession of the original papers relating to their transactions since the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris.*

Admiral Sir Robert Harland, who had been appointed to succeed Sir John Lindsay, with the same powers, and a more respectable naval force, was charged with instructions from the King, to avoid, on any occasion, the appearance of lessening the consequence of the Company in the eyes of the natives of India, and he received the strongest

* *Vide* page 294.

1770. MADRAS. strongest injunctions, to remove the then existing causes of disquiet and disunion.

At the time that these points were engaging the attention of the authorities in England, the Nabob of the Carnatic, supported by Sir John Lindsay, was urging the Council at Madras to join him in an alliance with the Mahrattas against Hyder.

1771. Council refuse to join the Nabob in an alliance with the Mahrattas. The Council refused to concur in such a step, and dwelt upon the injury which arose to the Company's affairs, by such an interference as that exercised by Sir John Lindsay. "To give you," observed the Council, in writing to the Court, "a clear representation of the dangerous embarrassments through which we have been struggling to carry on your affairs, since the arrival of his Majesty's powers in this country, is a task far beyond our abilities: they are daily more and more oppressive to us. It has always been our opinion, that, with your authority, we had that of our Sovereign and nation delegated to us through you, for managing the important concerns of our country under this Presidency. It is upon the prevalence of this opinion in India that our influence and your interests are vitally founded. It was in the confidence of this opinion that your servants, exerting all their vigour, acquired such power and wealth for their country."

After offering some remarks, as to what might have been the objects and motives of his Majesty's Government

Government in sending Sir John Lindsay to India, the Council pointed out the striking opposition between that officer's political system when he first reached India, and that by which he was now governed. "At first he was the declared guardian of peace; now, he declares for hostile measures, and accuses us of a criminal inactivity. He would willingly lead us into war, to favour the Mahrattas and increase their power; and, not succeeding in that, he would drive us into immediate hostilities with Tanjore, before we are prepared to act with vigour and effect, even with the certainty of bringing down the Mahrattas in an hostile invasion on the Carnatic, and at the risk of tempting the Nizam to an attack upon the Northern Circars. 1771. MADRAS.

"Were we permitted to deliver our sentiments relative to the preservation of the national interests here, we should humbly offer it as an opinion that, if his Majesty will not be pleased to recall his servant and powers, and leave us uncontrolled, but accountable for our measures, there is a necessity that the forces we command be taken into the hands of the Crown, and transferred with plenary powers to the absolute direction of his Majesty's minister."

The erroneous impressions that had been created in the mind of the Nabob, received additional force from a matter which, under the existing circumstances, tended to lower the Presidency, and add to the importance of his Highness. A

1771. MADRAS. despatch reached the Council, announcing that his Majesty had been pleased to confer the dignity of Knight of the Bath on Sir John Lindsay and Major-General Coote, and that the insignia of the order had been sent to the Nabob, with full instructions for his investing the knights with the order.

Rajah of Tanjore. The conduct of the Rajah of Tanjore towards some of the Polygar chiefs, increased the points of difference between the Nabob and the Council. The Rajah had advanced, in the month of April, against the Marawar country, under pretence that some districts had been wrested from the Tanjore government. The claim to those districts was resisted by the Nabob, who contended that the Rajah was a tributary to the Circar of the Carnatic, and that he had no right to call the Polygars to account. The Council were satisfied of the impropriety of the Rajah's conduct; the President addressed a letter to him, pointing out the relation in which he stood towards the Nabob, and the surprise that had been occasioned by his proceeding to attack Moravee, a Polygar dependent upon the Trichinopoly country.

His proceedings against Polygars. The Rajah stated in reply:—"If I suffer Moravee to take possession of my country, Nalcooty to take my elephants, and Tondaman to injure my country, it will be a dishonour to me among the people, to see such compulsions used by the Polygars. You are a protector of my government; notwith-

notwithstanding, you have not settled a single affair. I have finished the affairs relating to Moravee, and confirmed him in his business: the affair with Nalcqoty remains to be finished, which I shall also finish."

1771. MADRAS.

It was ultimately settled, that recourse should be had to negociation; and as the Tanjore vakeel did not possess authority to settle the disputes, the Nabob resolved to depute his eldest son, OMDUT-UL-OMRAH, to Trichinopoly. His mission was supported by the Council's despatching troops and stores for Trichinopoly, to be in readiness to act against Tanjore, should circumstances call for such a measure.

Nabob's son proceeds against Tanjore.

The Rajah refused submission. A force under General Smith accordingly marched from Trichinopoly, on the 13th September, and arrived before Vellum, eight miles south-west of Tanjore, on the 16th. On the morning of the 20th, a battery was opened against it, and at midnight the fort was evacuated. On the 23d, Tanjore was invested. On the 27th, at the moment the breach was reported practicable, a letter was received by General Smith, from Omdut-ul-Omrah, announcing terms of accommodation; and, on the 27th of October, a peace was concluded between the Nabob and the Rajah, without the intervention of the Company.*

The fort of Vellum was ceded to the Nabob, who

* *Vide* Printed Treaties.

1771. MADRAS. who requested that the Council would place a garrison in it, in order to render it an effectual check on the Rajah's conduct. The Marawar and Nalcooty Polygars not having obeyed the requisition of the Nabob, to join with their forces in the operations against the Rajah, the Nabob urged the Council to call them to account.

Sir Robert Harland reaches Madras and delivers King's letter to Nabob.

Sir Robert Harland reached Madras, in command of a squadron of his Majesty's ships, on the 2d of September. He announced his arrival to the Council, whom he met assembled on the 13th, and informed them that he possessed full powers, as the King's plenipotentiary, to inquire into the observance of the eleventh article of the Treaty of Paris; and that he had a letter from his Majesty to the Nabob. The letter was delivered to his Highness by the Admiral, the troops in the garrison attending the ceremonial. On the 1st of October, having intimated to the Council his readiness to be of any use in the progress of their affairs, he quitted the roads, in order to avoid the approaching monsoon, and retired to Trincomalee, despatching a vessel to ascertain the state of the French force at the Mauritius, which was reported to be very considerable.

In the early part of December, there being reason to apprehend that the Mahrattas were advancing towards the Carnatic, the Council resolved to move the troops into a central position, that

that they might more effectually present a check to their incursions. 1771. MADRAS.

The Nabob being opposed to this measure, still pressed the Council to assist him, by joining with the Mahrattas against Hyder. The President had an interview with the Nabob, at which he pointed out his Highness's total want of means to defray the charge of such a proceeding, even were it sound in point of policy. Failing in inducing the Council to fall in with his views, the Nabob called in the aid of Sir Robert Harland, and stated to him the advantages which the Mahrattas had promised, in the event of his assisting them, in conjunction with the English, and the distress which would be occasioned to him should he not effect that object: adding, that he had been called upon to pay a considerable sum to the Company; that he had a load of debt; that his treasury was inadequate to meet all these demands; that an invasion of his territories would lead to the destruction of the Carnatic; and that he, therefore, appealed to, and claimed, the royal protection.

Council decline to join the Nabob with the Mahrattas against Hyder.

This proceeding led Sir Robert Harland to address the Council. He stated that, should a peace be refused to the Mahrattas, on the terms which they proposed, they threatened to destroy the whole of the Carnatic "with fire and sword," and they had a great army on the frontiers to carry their threats into execution. The Admiral was not backward in asserting and acting upon the

Sir Robert Harland supports views of Nabob.

1771. MADRAS. the powers which he considered he possessed. He observed, that the peace of the Carnatic, the prosperity of the Company, the preservation of the British interests, and the permanency of their influence in India, appeared to him very proper objects for the attention of a "national plenipotentiary." "As it is possible I may think them of consequence enough to require a national alliance for their security, and as the particular interests of the United Company of Merchants will be a very material consideration, I am to demand of you, as their confidential servants, such lights as may direct my judgment, and particularly what are your reasons for refusing to acquiesce in what the Nabob thinks the only measure for the preservation of his country, and what appears to me to offer the only prospect of security, in the present circumstances, to the British interests in this part of India."* He, at the same time, transmitted to the Council a copy of his commission from the King.

Differences between Council and Sir Robert Harland.

The Council felt that they could not communicate their transactions in the affairs of the Company, for the same reasons which had weighed with them in the case of Sir John Lindsay. They, therefore, determined to address two letters to the Admiral; the one in his character of plenipotentiary, declaring why they declined putting him in possession of what he had called for regarding

* Military Consultations, 1771.

garding the Company's transactions, observing at the same time, that it was above all things their most anxious desire to manifest their unfeigned allegiance and inviolable attachment to his Majesty's most sacred person and government; but that they could not render an account of their conduct to any one but a constitutional authority, such as the Parliament of Great Britain and the Courts of Civil Judicature. The other letter was addressed to Sir Robert Harland, as commander of the King's ships, wherein they observed: "We have it now in the most authentic manner from you, as his Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary, that they threaten to destroy the whole Carnatic with fire and sword, if certain conditions which they require are not submitted to; which conditions are, as you express it, and as we believe they express it, friendship with the English and the Nabob, and a certain assistance from both, against Hyder Ally, who is their enemy. Words are only used to convey ideas, and the same words may convey different, and even contrary ideas, according to the circumstances that attend them. Thus, if the Mahrattas were to propose friendship with the English and the Nabob, in the way that states generally propose treaties of friendship for mutual advantage, we should understand by it what the word in its primitive and natural sense implies, and should most gladly embrace it, in any way that might be

1771. MADRAS.

1771. MADRAS. be advantageous to the Company's commerce, productive of security to their possessions, and consistent with the rights and powers granted to them by charter; but, when they require friendship and assistance, and denounce threats of fire and sword, if their demands are not complied with, the words change their meaning. It is no more friendship they propose; it is an abject submission they demand to their imperious will; such a submission as is conformable to the usage of the country. The subjected powers are always compelled to attend the haughty conquerors with a certain number of troops. This is not all. It is not only a demand of servile submission they require; they mean to render it still more humiliating: it must be accompanied with the most flagrant breach of national faith. A formal treaty of peace and amity was concluded between this Presidency, on the part of the Company and Hyder Ally Cawn, in the year 1769. He hath committed no act that can give the least attaint to that engagement, at least that we know of; but, on the contrary, he hath granted to the Company all the privileges and advantages of trade in his country, which they enjoyed before the late war with him. The Mahrattas add to their haughty demand, this specific condition—that the assistance to be given them by the English and the Nabob be expressly employed, in open violation of the faith of that treaty, against Hyder Ally

Ally Cawn. We, therefore, offer it as our opinion, that a submission to such a demand would be in the highest degree derogatory to the honour of the British nation, and contrary to the interests of the Company." They concluded by suggesting, that the most effectual mode of securing the Carnatic, and, consequently, the Nabob, against the Mahrattas, would be by a diversion on the Malabar coast. 1771. MADRAS.

Sir Robert Harland declined to separate his character as Commander-in-chief from that of Plenipotentiary. After commenting upon the various points urged by the Council, in support of the policy which they determined to follow, he observed, "Your charge of an unconstitutional act cannot be against me: I do no more than my duty. But it seems to me to be directly pointed at the Royal Authority and the undoubted rights of the Crown; and when you take upon you to censure a measure which is the sacred privilege of Majesty, and the constitutional rights of your Sovereign, let me tell you it is very unbecoming; it is presumptuous, it is arrogant; and I know not whether it may not be looked upon as criminal in the eye of the law, as it is an undoubted maxim in the British Government, that the privileges of the prince are equally sacred with the liberty of the subject."*

On the 28th December, he declared it to be his

* Consultations, 26th December, 1771.

1771. MADRAS. his intention to enter into a negociation with the Mahrattas, through Mhaderao, or any one he might appoint. After expressing his respect for the East-India Company, he stated, "I must and shall, upon every such important occasion, always make a great distinction between the real interests of the greatest commercial body in the world, and the private views and interested consideration of individuals." The Council indignantly repelled this insinuation. Sir Robert Harland persevered in treating with the Mahrattas, and the Council as firmly abstained from taking part in such a proceeding. At this juncture, they were put in possession of the Court's views* regarding the line of conduct to be observed towards the Nabob, the Mahrattas, Hyder, and his Majesty's plenipotentiary, which fortified them in their determination to preserve neutrality as far as possible.

1772. The Admiral intends to treat with the Mahrattas. The Council were apprised by Sir Robert Harland, that he had proposed to the Mahrattas, in the name of the King of England, a cessation of hostilities between their nation, the English, and the Nabob of the Carnatic, until such time as his Majesty's pleasure should be known: and that he understood the Mahrattas had acceded to the proposal, and withdrawn their troops from the frontiers.

This transaction presented a singular specimen of diplomacy. A minister plenipotentiary from the

* *Vide* page 301.

the Crown of Great Britain, writing in his Majesty's name to a Mahratta general, proposing a cessation of hostilities between their nation, the English, and the Nabob, when neither of the latter powers had committed any act of hostility: the Nabob having opposed the advance of the English army for the protection of his borders, which the Mahrattas were plundering, whilst the Nabob and the English were calmly looking on! 1772. MADRAS.

The Council having acknowledged, in courteous terms, the communication from the Admiral as to the negociations with the Mahrattas; there was reason to anticipate that here all differences would have terminated. Another circumstance, however arose, which occasioned an irreparable breach between the two authorities.

The Admiral had claimed many of the Company's European soldiers, on the ground of their being deserters from his Majesty's service. Some of these men having, in the opinion of the Council, been improperly wrested from them, a protracted correspondence took place, in the course of which the Council strongly remonstrated against Sir Robert Harland countenancing the acts of his officers. He ultimately issued directions for their desisting from further claims; but nevertheless characterised the conduct of the Council as "diabolically mischievous, and flagrantly unjust." Having declined, after a statement by the Council, which they considered fully refuted the charge,

to

1772. MADRAS. to offer any explanation or apology, the Council desisted from all further communication.

Sir Robert Harland embarks without usual honours.

The Admiral embarked from Madras on the 7th October, without paying the usual compliment of taking leave of the President as *Governor of the Fort*. The omission appeared, by a letter from Sir Robert Fletcher to the President,* to have been premeditated on the part of Sir Robert Harland. He was, accordingly, neither accompanied by the Governor to the beach, or saluted from the Fort; both which marks of honour had been observed towards Sir John Lindsay, who took formal leave

* Letter from Sir Robert Fletcher to the Honourable Jonas Du Pré, Esq., dated Fort St. George, 7th October 1773 :

"Dear Sir ;—When I took leave of the admiral, the 5th instant, I told him that, by a conversation I had had with you, I understood you was then unacquainted with the time of his intended departure, and that you mentioned to me his having been at your Garden-house to ask Mrs Du Pré's commands for Bombay, without paying you the usual compliment, or giving you any intimation of his departure. The admiral said, he could pay no such compliment to any servant of the Company, and that his visit was to Mrs. Du Pré. I replied, I was sorry for such unhappy misunderstanding ; that I knew the Governor meant to attend him to the surf and pay him every due compliment, if he would but observe the usual forms of communication with him ; but if he did not, I feared it would interfere with the honours intended to be shewn him at parting. He answered, 'Mr. Du Pré is the best judge of that.'

"I am, &c.

(Signed) "ROB. FLETCHER."

"P.S. The above is, perhaps, not word for word my conversation with the admiral, but I am sure it is strictly the sense and meaning of it."

leave of the President, notwithstanding the differences between them had been greater than those with Sir Robert Harland. 1772. MADRAS.

The Council remarked, "that ceremonies are trifles in private life, and merely as they touch the individual; but opinion and usage have made public honours necessary to public characters, and have proportioned those honours to the character. In that light, they become important; and supinely to receive an intended slight degrades the office and invites further indignity." Although the honour was withheld from the individual, the Council gave strict orders that the moment the squadron got under weigh, a salute of fifteen guns should be fired from the Fort; but the squadron remained at anchor during the whole of the day, and sailed in the night.

Thus terminated a mission, which was originally based upon erroneous principles, and in its progress produced embarrassments and differences, little calculated to promote either the public character or interests.

Relations with the Nabob and Tanjore.

The Council drew the attention of the Court to the position in which they stood towards the Nabob and the Rajah of Tanjore, and pointed out the relation of those two powers to each other.

The province of Tanjore was so situated, that the Carnatic would always be a natural barrier to it against invaders by land; and it was, therefore reasonable that it should always bear a part of the

1772. MADRAS. the charge of repelling such invaders. The tribute Tanjore paid to the Carnatic, in peace as well as war, was considered only as an acknowledgement of superiority; what quota of troops or pecuniary aid it should supply appeared to have been arbitary, or rather what the government of the Carnatic could compel, Tanjore having refused both, when its ruler felt that he had power to support such refusal. The Council observed, "this is by no means peculiar to these two states; the same principle prevails throughout Hindostan."

The principle was that of power; and, though it had long prevailed, it became more generally felt after the invasion of Nadir Shah, and the assumption of power by the various Omrahs, whose influence increased as that of the Mogul was diminished. The Council stated, that want of means,—the uncertainty of the designs of the Nizam, the Mahrattas, and Hyder,—and the provisions of the treaty in which the Rajah of Tanjore was included,—all combined against the exercise of coercive measures, in 1770, for the purpose of supporting the claim against him for the defence of his country, and for the payment to the Nabob of the *peshcush*, which the Company had guaranteed.

The subsequent operations against Tanjore were occasioned by the Rajah's indifference towards the Nabob, and his prosecuting hostilities against the

the Polygars, over whose country Mahomed Ally claimed jurisdiction. The Tanjoreans were greatly exasperated against the Nabob, being impressed with a conviction that he intended to possess himself of the whole of their country, on the first favourable opportunity. It was the opinion of the Council, that this impression would lead the Rajah to join any power, should disturbances arise in the Carnatic, which would enable him to throw off the yoke of the Nabob. They considered, that the Company's guarantee of the engagement of Tanjore with the Nabob, had been cancelled by the late proceedings under Omdut-ul-Omrah, and that the Rajah would thus be left at the mercy of Mahomed Ally; they, therefore, gave it as their decided opinion, that Tanjore ought to be taken, openly and avowedly, under the Company's protection; or that the country should be conquered and wholly subdued by them.*

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Parliamentary inquiry contemplated.

These views of the Council reached the Court in the month of September. The Parliamentary inquiry, then in progress, into the Company's affairs, precluded the Directors from giving any definite instructions on the important advices received from India. They wrote, on the 11th December, 1772:—"In our former letters of this season, you have been acquainted with the

* Letter, 28th February 1772.

1772. MADRAS. the critical situation of the Company's affairs, and by our ship *Mercury*, we enclosed for your perusal the King's speech at the opening of the present session. In consequence thereof, Committees have been appointed to inquire into the state and condition of the Company's affairs, both at home and abroad. The measures which may be pursued, in consequence of their reports to the two Houses of Parliament, indispensably occasion such particular and constant attention on our part, as at present to deprive us of the opportunity of entering into a reply at large to your advices now before us, and, therefore, our remarks and directions thereon are necessarily suspended, until the departure of the latter ships of this season."

Succession to Zemindaries.

Opparrow, who had held the zemindary of Nozeed jointly with his brother Narrain Row, having died without issue, the zemindary naturally devolved on the surviving brother. The Council, however, thought it necessary that all the Zemindars should clearly understand, the Company asserted the right of judging and determining the succession. The Resident was ordered to make inquiry, for form's sake; after which Narrain Row was put into possession.

Council resolve on operations against Polygars.

The Council having determined, in communication with the Nabob, to commence operations for the purpose of reducing the Marawar and Nalcooty Polygars, a force of one hundred and twenty artillery, four hundred European infantry, three

three battalions of sepoys, and six battering cannon, to be augmented by some of the Nabob's cavalry, and two of his battalions of sepoys, marched from Trichinopoly, the 12th of May, accompanied by Omdut-ul-Omrah, who had been deputed by his father to superintend the expedition. He arrived before the capital of the Marawar Polygar, on the 28th May. The batteries opened against it on the morning of the 2d June, and the fort was taken by assault in the evening, the Marawar Polygar, his mother, and the Dewan, being captured in the place. 1772. MADRAS.

Trepanavam, one hundred and fifteen miles east of Madura, belonging to the Nalcooty Polygar, was taken by assault, under the direction of Lieutenant-Colonel Bonjour, on the 24th of May. The Polygar was not reduced until the end of June, after which the troops were ordered to their respective stations.

The Rajah of Travancore declined compliance with the requisition of the Nabob of the Carnatic for aid in the operations against the refractory Polygars, on the ground that he was apprehensive Hyder would attack the Travancore country; Hyder being applied to, disavowed having even contemplated such a step. He declared that the Travancore country was in no shape dependent upon him, and that he had no demands whatever upon the Rajah. Since peace had been concluded between Hyder and the Mahrattas, the attention Conduct of the Rajah of Travancore.

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tion of the former had been directed to recruiting his army, and restoring the affairs of his own country. The Council remarked, "these measures were necessary, merely on a defensive plan; but mere defence and inactivity cannot long be expected from his genius."

Brigadier General Smith, having returned to the Presidency, resigned the command of the army in the month of August. The post devolved upon Sir Robert Fletcher, who, in accordance with the Court's order of April 1771, was admitted to a seat in the Council and Select Committee, on the 24th of August.

Sir Robert Fletcher succeeds General Smith in command of army.

Various differences as to military arrangements arose between Sir Robert Fletcher, the President, and a majority of the Council. They were carried on with so much personal feeling, as not only to impede the progress of public business, but to create apprehensions that serious results might be produced, unless decided measures were taken to put an end to the proceedings.

1773. Differences between Council and Sir Robert Fletcher.

A question having arisen on the powers of the President, as commander of the garrison, in which the conduct of Sir Robert Fletcher formed matter of discussion, a decided majority of the Council were of opinion that he should withdraw. It was subsequently proposed, for the general welfare of the service, that Sir Robert Fletcher's absence from Council was essential to the good conduct of the public business. A resolution was passed by a majority

majority of seven to two in the Council, on the 12th January, that he should be ordered to repair to Trichinopoly, to take the command of that fortress, where his services could be most usefully employed for the Company's interests. On the following day, Sir Robert Fletcher addressed the President, stating that, as he considered the proceeding contrary to the order and intentions of the Court, and equal to a dismission of the service, he felt that the duty he owed to the public obliged him to make application for a passage and accommodation in the first ship for England, that he might be enabled to give his attendance in Parliament.* 1773. MADRAS.

On the 14th, Sir Robert Fletcher was desired to proceed to Trichinopoly, and informed that, on the same day, a Council would be summoned, when his letter would be considered. He replied by protesting, as a member of the government and of the legislature, against the conduct of the President, which he deemed contrary to law and to the privilege to which he was entitled. The Council

* However strange it may appear at the present day, that Members of the House of Commons should at any time have retained their seats, while serving in so distant a quarter of the globe as India, yet the instance in question, as well as that of Mr. Vansittart, in 1769 (*vide* note, page 191), are in point. The Act of the 10th Geo. IV., cap. 62, disqualifies persons holding the station of Governor or Deputy Governor in India, from a seat in Parliament.—Query, does it exclude *inferior* functionaries?

1773. MADRAS. Council informed him, that the proceeding was not intended as a dismission, but an appointment to a station, where his services might be most usefully employed. They repeated and enforced the same, and informed him that, when he should have complied therewith, and "have given the whole military establishment that example of obedience and attention which we have a right to expect, we shall give all due consideration to whatever you may have to represent." He reached Trichinopoly, and received charge of the fortress on the 26th January.

The Council met on the 29th, and came to a resolution, declaring that "out of unfeigned respect and veneration for the Honourable House of Commons and their privileges, Sir Robert Fletcher, in consequence of his plea of privilege as a member of parliament, is, for so much as depends on this Board, at full and free liberty to return to his duty in Parliament, whenever and by whatever conveyance he shall think proper; and that this Board do further declare Sir Robert Fletcher henceforth free and exonerated of and from all obligation to serve the Company in any capacity under this Presidency, that so there may not remain any restraint, or colour of restraint upon, or impediment to, his proceeding to his duty in Parliament, agreeable to his claim."

Sir Robert Fletcher's plea of privilege of Parliament.

Brigadier General Smith consented, at the earnest request of the Council, although on the eve

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eve of departure for England, to resume the command, and communicated the same to the Council, on the 29th January, in the following terms: "I assure you that no motive whatever could have induced me to enter into a public station again; but, being thus called upon by you, the duty I cheerfully acknowledge to my employers, and a very grateful sense of the advantages I have derived from their service, are obligations which outweigh with me every other consideration, and afford me this opportunity of once more shewing that attachment I have always professed for our honourable masters." General Smith's appointment being announced in orders, he took his seat as a member of the Council, on the 30th. Sir Robert Fletcher, having received a copy of the order on the 2d of February, wrote to the Council from Trichinopoly, that he had given over the command to the senior officer, and should proceed to the Presidency.

Mr. Du Pré resigned the government on the 31st January, and was succeeded by Mr. Wynch.

Sir Robert Fletcher proceeds to England.

Sir Robert Fletcher was to proceed to England on board the *Triton*, with Capt. the Hon. Fullarton Elphinstone. Further correspondence ensued, in which Sir Robert Fletcher animadverted upon the state of the army. To which General Smith fully and satisfactorily replied. He then demanded copies of such allegations as might be sent home regarding him, or access to the records; intimating

1773. MADRAS. intimating, that the Council would refuse the same at their peril. The Council did not see fit to comply with either of the requests, and he embarked in the *Triton*, which was despatched on the 15th March. The subject was brought under the consideration of the Court of Directors; whose decision, at the same time that it condemned the conduct of Sir Robert Fletcher, regarding the authority of the Governor as commandant of the fort, restored him to the command of the army whenever Brigadier General Smith should resign.

The conduct of the Rajah of Tanjore led to the Council unanimously agreeing to meet the requisition of the Nabob of the Carnatic for troops, to enable him to subdue his tributary. The force assembled at Trichinopoly, under the command of General Smith. They arrived before the capital of Tanjore on the 6th of August. On the 20th, the army broke ground, and on the 17th of September the place was carried by assault, with an inconsiderable loss, the Rajah and his family being prisoners to the Nabob's two sons, who accompanied the expedition. At the commencement of these operations, intelligence was received by the Nabob, that the Dutch were aiding the Rajah with stores from Negapatam. He accordingly despatched a vakeel, with a remonstrance. To give weight to this proceeding, Sir Robert Harland ordered two ships of war to accompany the vakeel. The Dutch disavowed, in the most submissive manner,

manner, having rendered any aid to the Rajah of Tanjore. Suspicions still existed that such was not the fact; they were shortly confirmed by the Dutch possessing themselves of the sea-port of Nagore, and also of some valuable districts in the Tanjore country, on the plea that they had purchased them of the Rajah. As a tributary of the Nabob, he had no right to alienate these possessions; but it was not until the appearance of the Nabob's troops, under the command of his son, followed at some distance by General Smith, that the Dutch guards quitted Nagore and retired to Negapatam. Had the Council hesitated in aiding the Nabob to reduce Tanjore, and permitted the Rajah to introduce foreign troops into the centre of his country, and to make grants of districts and sea-ports to an European power, the results might have seriously affected the English interests on the coast.

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The position of Hyder and the Mahrattas, at the commencement of this year, threatened a descent on the Carnatic, and induced the Council, in conjunction with the Nabob, to take precautions for its defence. The jealousy of the Nabob, his vacillating conduct towards the native powers, the declared poverty of his treasury, his desire of acting independently of the Council, and his secret intrigues, rendered the task of guiding his affairs one of no easy accomplishment; still it was the determination of the Council to preserve, as far

1774. State of the Carnatic.

1774. far as possible, the tranquillity of the Carnatic, and to avoid anything tending to involve them in dissensions either with Hyder or the Mahrattas.

1771. BOMBAY. The President of Bombay, Mr. Hodges, died at Victoria, on the 23d February, and was succeeded by Mr. Hornby.

Mahrattas defeat Hyder. On the 7th March, the Mahrattas obtained a complete victory over Hyder, near Seringapatam, obliging him to retire within that fortress. He applied to the Council for aid, which they were utterly unable to afford him, either in men or money, but offered to supply him with five hundred muskets and four twenty-pound guns.

The Mahrattas, being in possession of the greater part of Mysore, prevented Hyder from raising troops, or drawing the necessary supplies for them. In the month of October, he addressed the President, representing that the enemy, notwithstanding his readiness to pay them their just *chout*, were determined to make a conquest of his dominions, and then to attack the Nabob of Arcot and the Carnatic; he, therefore, called upon the Council, in the name of the Company, who were equally interested with him in checking the progress of the Mahrattas, to join in measures for that object. The Council were disposed to consent, under all circumstances, provided Hyder assigned over the forts and districts of Mangâlore and Pier Gur, and deposited five lacs of pagodas towards

towards the expenses, that he should be informed five hundred Europeans and one thousand two hundred sepoys would be sent to his assistance. An intimation of this intention was notified to the Council at Madras. 1771. BOMBAY.

Hyder applied for a specific force of one thousand Europeans, and four thousand sepoys, to be employed in making a diversion by an attack on Bassein and Salsette, and to march inland, in order to draw off the Mahrattas from his country. The Council felt no disposition to concur in this proposition, it being evidently the desire of Hyder to make them principals in the war. The receipt, at this moment, through the Council at Madras, of the Court's views,* determined them to close all further treaty. Hyder's fortune triumphed over his danger: he obtained a tolerable peace, without a friend or ally; but the coolness of the Madras Government alienated his feelings, and indisposed him towards the English power.

Conquests of Hyder.

During the differences between the Mahrattas and the Nizam, Hyder had made the entire conquest of the dominions of the Zamorin and the King of Cotiote; he also preferred a complaint to the Resident at Tellicherry, that some of the principal people of Cotiote had been harboured in the Company's districts. The Prince of Cherika paid a visit to the Chief at Tellicherry, by whom

* *Vide* page 301.

1771. BOMBAY. whom he was interrogated regarding his late correspondence with Hyder. He admitted, with evident confusion, that he had received several letters from the Nabob, the purport of which he did not before choose to disclose, but said that, on his return, he would send the originals for inspection. Instead of fulfilling his promise, he assembled two hundred natives, and immediately went over to the Cotiote country, and joined Hyder's camp, which was about twelve leagues from Tellicherry.

Sir Robert Harland arrives at Bombay and asserts his powers.

Sir Robert Harland having arrived at Bombay, produced his powers to the Council. They remarked, that he appeared to think he was authorized to enter into any treaty, and to make any terms on behalf of the Company, with any princes or powers in India that he might see fit. "Were such a power granted, it would be truly alarming; but, as we cannot believe any such power was intended by the Crown, or that we are empowered or authorized to submit our demand on the Mahrattas, or any other power, we declined to do so, until we should hear from you on the subject."

1772. The Nabob of Broach had, at his own instance, in the month of July 1771, repaired to Bombay, and entered into a treaty with the Company, on the 30th November, by which they were permitted to erect a factory there. The Nabob was not to assist the enemies of the English, but to aid the Company;

Company; nor was he to engage in war without their consent; but in hostilities begun in communication with the Council, they were to aid him, on his paying a certain stipulated rate for each man, and four lacs in full for all demands on the part of the Company. A firm friendship was to subsist between the Councils of Surat and Bombay. The Nabob having, under various pretences, evaded from time to time the performance of any of the articles of the treaty, the Council recalled Mr. Morley, their Resident at Broach. At the earnest entreaty of the Nabob, he was sent back; but his reception, added to the continued extraordinary conduct of the Nabob, in refusing to observe the treaty, led the majority of the Council to concur in sending an expedition to enforce the observance of its provisions. The troops and vessels left Bombay on the 2d November, under the command of Brigadier-General Wedderburn, and Mr Watson, the Superintendent of the Marine. The general, reconnoitering too near the works, was killed on the 14th. On the 16th, the batteries opened against it, and on the 18th, it was taken by storm. Five officers and one cadet were killed; two captains and four lieutenants wounded. The revenues were stated to amount to seven lacs; half of which was claimed by Futty Sing Guicowar, with whom an agreement was entered into on the 12th January, by which it was declared that the town of Broach, lately

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Operations against Broach.

1773. BOMBAY. lately belonging to Mahazuz Cawn Nabob, having been conquered by the East-India Company, every thing should remain on the footing it was at the time of the conquest, the English and Futty Sing each receiving a share of the revenues.*

Mr. Mostyn had been especially designated by the Court for the station of Resident at Poonah, in order to acquire, upon safe and honourable terms, such privileges and possessions as would not only be beneficial to the Company's commerce, but also contribute to the security of their settlements on the coast of Malabar.

The acquisition of Salsette, Bassein, and Caranja, were the principal objects contemplated by the Court, and strongly pressed upon the attention of the Council,† who, in negociation with Mhaderao, were authorized to offer in exchange what they might deem an equivalent for such a cession. The Council, in the month of February, advised the Court that there was little prospect, at that period, of the object being accomplished.

Transactions at Poonah. Mhaderao died in November 1772, and was succeeded by his brother, Narrain Rao. Janojee, the Mahratta chieftain in Berar, died about the same time. Narrain Rao was murdered in his palace at Poonah, on the 20th August, in the following year, by the partizans of his uncle, Ragobah,

* *Vide* Printed Treaties. † *Vide* page 210.

gobah,* who was immediately proclaimed throughout the city, and succeeded with little opposition. Ragobah proceeded forthwith to Sattarah, for the purpose of receiving the *surpaw*† from the Rajah. Moodajee Bhonslah was the party whose influence he had most to apprehend. Ragobah had written to him to attend with five thousand men: notwithstanding this requisition, he proceeded with his troops towards Poonah, and was joined by some other chiefs, who enabled him to assemble a force of nearly 80,000 men. This movement created great suspicion on the part of Ragobah, whose force amounted only to about 60,000, and the fidelity of these was doubtful. He was, however, ultimately joined by Moodajee. The united force proceeded against the Nizam, who had taken the field with a considerable army. An engagement ensued, in which the Nizam had the advantage; but a treaty followed, to the benefit of Ragobah, who then meditated an attack on the Carnatic, in order to induce the Nabob to pay him a large amount of *chout*, and likewise to explain his conduct in having made war against the Rajah of Tanjore. Ragobah was deterred from carrying his intentions into execution, by the proceedings of the ministerial party at Poonah, who were dissatisfied with his government, and the means by which

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* Properly Ragonant Rao, but commonly called and known as Rogobah, which designation is used.

† *Vide* page 8.

1773. BOMBAY. which he had obtained it. They availed themselves of his distance to declare in favour of the widow of Nairain Rao. These measures obliged him to retrace his steps, from the confines of the Carnatic to the heart of his own government. The two parties met—Ragobah gained a decisive victory over the forces of the ministry; their general was taken prisoner, and died of his wounds. Notwithstanding Ragobah's success, his position was very precarious; having little money, entertaining doubts as to the fidelity of his troops, and being constrained to levy contributions, in his marches through the country, in order to support his army, while the remains of the ministerial force was recruited from that of Moodajee, who had likewise joined the Nizam.

At this juncture, the country round Broach was thrown into a state of disorder, by Ragobah having supported Govind Rao, in opposition to Futty Sing, who had for some time been at the head of the Guicowar government; but being defeated in an engagement with his brother, he was dispossessed of all the country except Baroda, the capital, the open country remaining under Govind Rao.

The determination of the Government of Bombay to support Ragobah, involved the Company in hostilities with the Mahrattas. The opposition which he met with in his efforts to re-establish his power

power at Poonah, led to his making proposals to the Council at Bombay for the assistance of a body of the Company's troops. His terms fell short of those required by the Council, which included a cession of Salsette and Bassein; Rágobah being averse to parting with either of those possessions. 1773. BOMBAY.

CHAPTER VII.

1772. Attention of Parliament directed to the Company.

HAD the members of the Special Commission, nominated in 1769 * for the purpose of supervising the whole of the Company's affairs, reached India, they would have operated as a check on the extensive powers of control and interference assumed by the naval officers of the crown towards the several governments. The effects caused by their proceeding rendered the necessity still more apparent for introducing a revised system of administration, as regarded both the Home and Foreign affairs. Enactments had been passed to regulate the declaration of a dividend, and the exercise of the ballot by the proprietors: a lengthened and rigid scrutiny had been substituted into the general state of the Company, and doubts had been raised on the question of right in the territorial possessions; but the Company were still unfettered in the exercise of all powers of government, and were at full liberty to follow their own views, whether relating to the dismemberment of a kingdom, the deposition of a sovereign, or the provision

* *Vide* page 272.

sion of an investment. But although possessing this power, they had no means of effectually enforcing obedience to their orders, on the part of their servants, who were represented "to have made enormous fortunes at the expense of their masters, and to have hazarded by their conduct the total loss of their valuable possessions." 1772.

From the period of hostilities commencing with the French, followed by those with the native powers, the greatest embarrassment was occasioned by each of the three presidencies acting independently of the other. There was no defined superior authority to direct affairs, or to ensure unity of object, or co-operation in action.

This state of things led to the following passage in the speech from the throne, at the opening of the session in January 1772. "The concerns of this country are so various and extensive as to require the most vigilant and active attention; and some of them, as well from remoteness of place as from other circumstances, are so peculiarly liable to abuse, and exposed to danger, that the interposition of the Legislature for their protection may become necessary."

Financial embarrassments of the Company.

The financial means of the Company had been materially affected by the measures of their servants. The subsequent operation against the Mogul and the Vizier—the war in the Carnatic, during which Hyder committed such extensive ravages—the reduction of the refractory Polygars,

1772. and the incursions of the enemy on the coast of Malabar, not only absorbed the revenues, but caused a suspension of the investment upon the out-turn, on which the Directors relied to meet the heavy demand that pressed upon them, in the large amount of bills drawn from India, in addition to the charge occasioned by the necessary supply of troops and stores for service. Their only resource for relief was an application to the minister. Little encouragement was, however, held out of pecuniary aid from that quarter.

Disappointment had been created on the part of the public by the non-payment of the £400,000, under the agreement of 1769.* The affairs of the Company had become the general subject of discussion and animadversion. Pamphlets issued from the press, reflecting in strong terms of severity on the Company, and on the conduct of their servants. Virulent attacks were levelled against the character of Lord Clive, whose administration of the government of Bengal, in 1765, had unjustly caused him many enemies. The circumstances under which his lordship had entered upon that arduous trust were forgotten, whilst the most distorted views were given of his measures. Lord Clive was not a recognized servant of the state: he derived no authority from law: he was placed over a presidency, divided, head-strong, and licentious—the Treasury was without

Attacks on the Company and on Lord Clive.

* *Vide* page 271.

without money, and the service without subordination, discipline, or public spirit:* the subordinate functionaries being aware that they were only amenable to punishment within the precincts of the Mahratta ditch. Such a state of things was alone to be met and overcome by the firm and resolute line of conduct which his lordship adopted. The effect on the interests of the individuals who suffered under the well-merited rebuke their conduct had drawn upon them, led to the strong opposition evinced at the time towards his lordship, a feeling fomented by some of the leading members of the Direction, who were personally indisposed towards him. 1772.

The Chairman of the Court, who was likewise a Member of the House of Commons, had obtained leave to bring in a bill for the better administration of justice in India, and for controlling the Company's servants. The Proprietors having rejected a proposition for conferring extraordinary powers on Mr. Hastings, who had been appointed to succeed to the Government in Bengal; the Directors resolved upon sending out another Superintending Commission for the purpose of correcting abuses, and applying such remedies as might place their affairs in a satisfactory condition. The bill submitted by the Deputy-Chairman

Parliament restrain Company from appointing another Superintending Commission.

* The description given by his Lordship's successor. *Vide* page 177.

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Appoint two Committees of Inquiry.

Deputy-Chairman was lost on its second reading, the House determining to appoint two Parliamentary Committees to inquire into the affairs of the Company; the one a secret, the other a select committee.

The Secret Committee was to inquire into the state of the Company. They purposely made an early report, which led to an act restraining the Court from sending out the proposed Superintending Commission. Eight other reports were presented by the Committee, in which a full review was taken of the debts, credits, and effects of the Company; their profits from commerce, and their territorial acquisitions; the management of their affairs abroad and at home, the source of their revenues, the extent of bills drawn upon them from India, and the charges of their several settlements.

The Select Committee was to inquire into "the nature, state, and condition of the East-India Company."

The speech of Colonel Burgoyne, in April, 1772, when he moved the appointment of the Committee, of which he was chosen Chairman, sufficiently indicated the spirit in which the proceedings would be followed up. They branched out into an inquiry on points connected with the conduct of Lord Clive, and the services which his Lordship rendered to the Company in Bengal, in the year 1757. Thirty years had passed away since

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since his Lordship first reached India. He had on four several occasions received the thanks of the Court of Directors; he had been strongly urged to continue in the government of Bengal, and five years had elapsed since he finally quitted that country with the highest tokens of regard and esteem from those who succeeded him in the government, as well as from the Company at home. His Lordship's conduct in transactions in which he had been engaged, fifteen years before, was now arraigned at the bar of Parliament with a spirit of vituperation from which it was felt that his merits and services might well have shielded him. The report of the Committee was made on the 26th of May. It was observed by one of the members of the Committee, that it was his wish the inquiry should have been directed "not to persons but to things," but his voice had been over-ruled. Another described the proceedings as founded on envy and illiberal principles—as narrow—pointing at individuals, and neglecting the real and only object, "which should have been the provision of regulations for the future government."

Mr. Warren Hastings succeeds to the Government.

It was at this juncture that Mr. Warren Hastings succeeded to the government of Bengal, on the retirement of Mr. Cartier, in the month of April, 1772.

The earlier history of Mr. Hastings, with the statement of his services before he was placed in the

1772. BENGAL. Mr. Warren Hastings.

the prominent station of a Member of Council in the Government abroad, more properly belongs to the biographer. It is to be hoped that some one competent to do justice to the life of this extraordinary man, who for so long a period filled the public eye, will take up the subject. There must be abundant materials, both public and private, to furnish matter for a work which, in variety of incident and depth of interest, cannot be surpassed. A brief reference will be made to his original appointment, and to his services previously to his return to India in 1769.

Mr. Hastings, the son of the Rev. Penniston Hastings, was baptized at Churchill, in the county of Oxford, on the 15th December, 1732, and proceeded to Bengal as a Writer, on the 29th November, 1749, being then in his seventeenth year. He reached Calcutta in the autumn of the following year, and was attached as an assistant in the Secretary's office. In 1755 he appears to have been appointed one of the Council for managing the affairs of the factory at Cossimbuzar, where the ability which he manifested in discharging the duties of his office, gained for him the confidence of the Government. In 1756, the obstacles occasioned by the conduct of the Nabob to the progress of the Company's affairs, led to his being deputed, with one of his colleagues, to demand a private audience for the purpose of declaring, that unless measures were adopted to check

check the system of plunder pursued by his ministers, to gratify their avarice, on the Company's tenants, they should withdraw from the province. As there was reason to believe that some immediate change would take place in the native government, Mr. Hastings was authorized to expend 20,000 rupees amongst the servants of the Durbar in securing the interests of the Company. Mr. Hastings was one among a number of the Company's servants who stood forward at that crisis and accepted a military commission, which, it appears, he resigned, together with Messrs. Scrafton, Cartier, and Rider, in April 1757, when the troubles had terminated. In the following year he was at Moraudbaug, and entrusted with arrangements connected with the settlement of the Nabob's revenues and the claims of the Company. His conduct was highly approved by the Council at Calcutta, and a native agent, named Cossinaut, was sent up to aid him in the management of the responsible duties committed to him. Cossinaut was not to settle any thing finally, but through means of Mr. Hastings, and with his entire approbation. Throughout the year 1759 he appears to have encountered considerable difficulty in settling the Company's claims on the Nabob, and in attempting to satisfy a spirit of discontent which Jaffier Cawn manifested. As his pecuniary arrangements with the Durbar were considerable, he rendered full and explicit accounts

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counts of the monies which passed through his hands, to the satisfaction of the government.

At the close of 1759 he was relieved from the duties connected with the factory, and nominated Resident at Moraudbaug, and agent for the Company at the Nabob's Durbar; and so onerous were his duties, that the Government nominated an assistant who was cognisant with the native language, in which Mr. Hastings had acquired great proficiency: the officer was unfortunately drowned in his way up to join the Resident. In 1760, Mr. Hastings ineffectually endeavoured to obtain payment from the Nabob of two lacs and a half, which had been lent to him on account of the Company. In the month of November he was with the President, when arrangements were made with Meer Cossim, who was placed on the musnud, when Jaffier Cawn was again deposed.* In 1761 he was appointed to inquire into the conduct of Nundcomar, who forms so prominent a character in the course of subsequent events. That native had been falsely alleging, that the Company's Government were indisposed towards the Rajah of Burdwan; he had also instigated Roydullub to a similar attempt. The inquiry terminated in Nundcomar being confined a prisoner to his house as a dangerous character.

In December 1761, Mr. Hastings appears to have

* *Vide* page 77.

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have taken his seat as a Member of the Select Committee at Calcutta. In March 1762 he was deputed to visit the Nabob, with the view of settling the various points of dispute which had arisen from the unjustifiable conduct of the Company's servants in the prosecution of private trade, and in their behaviour towards the Nabob. It was on that occasion that the majority of the Council, in entire opposition to the President, issued orders to Mr. Hastings to demand a present of twenty lacs from the Nabob, which, they asserted, he had promised them on being placed upon the musnud. The Nabob indignantly rejected the demand, at which the Directors expressed their entire satisfaction. After various other services as a Member of the Select Committee, Mr. Hastings embarked for Europe in the ship *Medway*, in February 1765, his place as a Member of Council being filled by Mr. Gray, who was called from Malda for that purpose.

In consideration of his acknowledged talents and qualifications, the Court of Directors, on the 20th December, 1768, unanimously appointed him a member of Council at Fort St. George. It was announced to that government in the following terms:—"Mr. Warren Hastings, a gentleman who has served us many years upon the Bengal establishment with great ability and unblemished character, offering himself again to be employed in our service, we have, from a consideration of his just

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just merits and general knowledge of the Company's affairs, been induced to appoint him one of the members of our Council at your Presidency, and to station him next to Mr. Du Pré," who had been nominated to succeed to the government on the 31st January, 1770—Mr. Hastings being selected for his successor.

Appointed to Bengal Council, with succession to Chair.

In April, 1771, the Court, having had under consideration the condition of the Company's commerce, and the general aspect of their affairs, in Bengal, resolved to appoint Mr. Hastings second member of Council at Calcutta, with succession as President and Governor of Bengal, whither he was to proceed from Madras with the least possible delay.* He reached Calcutta on the 17th February, 1772, when he took his seat at the Board, and, on the 13th April following, assumed charge of the government,

Court's orders as to Mahomed Reza Khan.

One of the first measures which engaged his attention arose out of the Court's instructions of August, 1771, which he received only ten days after his accession to the chair. They related to Mahomed Reza Khan, whose name was associated with the early revenue administration of Bengal, and became familiar to the English reader in connexion with the seventeenth charge on the celebrated impeachment of Mr. Hastings.

Mahomed Reza Khan held the Chukla† of Dacca

* Letter to Madras, 10th April, 1771.

† An assemblage of the smaller divisions of a province.

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Dacca in 1762, of the Nabob Meer Jaffier, at a rent of between thirty-eight and thirty-nine lacs per annum. It was represented to the Court of Directors, that he had been considerably in arrear to the Nabob, who, it was alleged, had, by a subsequent agreement, consented to an abatement in the rent, from thirty-eight to twenty-seven lacs per annum. No authority in support of this allegation could be traced beyond the assertion of Mahomed Reza Khan. The Nabob was said to have complained of his carelessness, and to have strongly objected to his continuance in the Chukla; but at the entreaty of Mr. Spencer, then President, Meer Jaffier not only retained him, but removed him to Moorshedabad, where he exercised supreme power, as well over the Nabob himself as over all his ministers. The Nabob died, in February, 1765, and was succeeded by his son, Nijim-ud-Dowla, a minor. The Council, not considering him qualified to take into his own hands the management of his affairs, and being indisposed to leave them to the direction of Nundcomar, in whom he was inclined to place great confidence, they selected Mahomed Reza Khan, and, in concert with Nijim-ud-Dowla, appointed him *Naib Soubah** of the province of Bengal, in which capacity he was to conduct and manage all the Nabob's affairs.

Mahomed Reza Khan appointed Naib Soubah of Bengal.

On intelligence of this appointment reaching the Directors,

* Deputy Viceroy.

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Directors, they adverted to Mahomed Reza Khan's conduct when at Dacca, and observed, "We think you passed too slightly over the charge urged against him, of being so very deficient in accounting for the revenues of the province of which he had been governor."*

Notwithstanding these supposed grounds for attaching suspicion to his former conduct, the manner in which he discharged the duties of his new station received the repeated expression of the Council's approbation, who gave the strongest testimony to his having pursued the Company's interests with unvarying steadiness and diligence.

Testi mony in his favour.

Declining state of the Provinces.

The provinces had for some time been in a declining state. The Council instituted an inquiry into the supposed causes, and expressed their unanimous opinion,† that they arose from the want of sufficient checks on the instruments of government; the delegation of trust and authority to one or a few, which required the abilities and integrity of many to execute; their ignorance of the real produce and capacity of the country, in which they were necessarily kept by a set of men, who first deceived them from interest, and afterwards continued the deception through fear of punishment and a necessary regard to their own safety; the

* Letter to Bengal, February, 1766.

† Letter from Bengal, 30th September, 1769.

the numerous train of dependents and underlings whom the Collectors entertained, were all to be satisfied from the spoils of the industrious ryot; the venality which formed part of the genius of the Collectors, which was known to be openly exercised or tacitly allowed by Government, without drawing any shame or discredit on the guilty, or being thought any peculiar hardship on the injured: the collusion of the Collector with the Zemindar, whom the Collector employed as a tool to screen his mal-practices, or admitted as an associate in his fraudulent gains; the oppression to which the ryot was subject from the multitude of gomashtahs* and their dependents; and, lastly, whilst the Company were in reality the principals in the revenues of the country, and the most interested in the good conduct of its government, they were precluded from a knowledge of its real state. 1772. BENGAL.

"Power without control, knowledge without participation, and influence without any effectual counteraction, was a state of things too important and replete with consequences to be vested in any three ministers, or rather one single man, who, allowing him the clearest preference for integrity, ability, and attachment amongst his countrymen, could not be supposed superior to temptation, and at least ought not to be trusted so extensively and independently,

* Native Agents.

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independently, as has been necessarily the consequence of the present system."

Views of Court as to revenue management.

At the period that the Council were thus addressing the Court, the latter communicated to the Council their views as to the future management of the revenues,* and pointed out Mahomed Reza Khan as a fit person to be appointed Naib Dewan, or the Company's deputy, for the Bengal province; and, in like manner, Shatab Roy, or some other principal person, for the Bahar province.

The unexampled drought with which India had been visited, caused the greatest distress throughout the provinces. The future prospect was contemplated with so much dismay by the Council, that they suggested the expediency of authorizing a remission in the demands of the Government on account of the revenues, which remission they were constrained to grant to the farmers in the January following, without awaiting orders from Europe.

Revenue Councils appointed.

To give effect to the Court's instructions of 1769,† for a revision of the revenue management, Councils were appointed, in September, 1770, at Moorshedabad and Patna: the former for the Bengal provinces, the latter for those of Bahar.

The Councils were to inform themselves of the real state of the collections in every part; what rents

* *Vide* page 278. † *Vide* page 275.

rents were actually paid by the tenants, and what formerly; the nature of the cultivation; the chief produce of each district, and whether in that respect there was a prospect of improvement. Enquiry was to be made as to the charge of collections for some years preceding, in order that a judgment might be formed of the requisite number of Aumils* and other officers, "amongst whom immense sums had been divided," which it was supposed might be spared. 1772. BENGAL.

This reformation was to be carried forward in a moderate, steady, and persevering spirit, with a view rather to the prevention of frauds for the future than the punishment of offences which had been already committed. At the same time, they were not entirely to pass over offences, nor to abstain from enquiring into the character and conduct of the officers of government, from the highest to the lowest.

The Councils were to have the control of the Dewanny revenues; but all the business was to be carried on through the Naib, and under his seal and signature. He was likewise to give his advice and opinion upon all proposed measures. No appointments of officers or collectors were to be made by the Naib, nor was his seal to be affixed to any order but with the approbation of the Council. Regular consultations were to be kept of their proceedings. Mahomed

* Collectors of the Revenue.

1772. BENGAL. Duties of the Naib Dewan and Naib Nazim.

Mahomed Reza Khan had acted in the two capacities of Naib Dewân and Naib Nazim. In the former office were determined—all disputes as to revenue, boundaries of land, charity lands, lands held for private emolument, limits of cultivated or uncultivated lands, so as to fix the revenue arising therefrom on an equitable footing; jurisdictions on landholders, duties on merchandize, encroachments by inundation or otherwise, inheritances and patrimonies, religious lands, honorary lands, oppression of tenants or improper demands of Zemindars and Phousdars, or merchants: settling bundabust or rent-roll for the provinces, promoting cultivation and population. All sunnuds for lands required the approbation of the Nizamut. Under the Nizamut were regulated—all the affairs of the household, protection of the country, sentence on criminals and capital punishments, regulation of courts of judicature, appointment of Naibs and Phousdars.*

Upon the due execution of these extensive and important trusts, the welfare of the country and the happiness of the people mainly depended. Hitherto, no Europeans had formally interfered. It was too much to expect that one man should discharge them satisfactorily; and it could scarcely have been matter of surprise, that the results of the inquiry instituted in 1769, justified in some measure,

* Magistrates under the immediate orders of the Nazim.

measure, the suspicions entertained by the Council, that oppression had existed, and that the revenues had been overstrained. Instances were cited in proof of the lamentably defective system which had prevailed of administering what was termed justice; but these proofs tended rather to shew the absence of any well-defined system, than to bring home acts of personal delinquency to Mahomed Reza Cawn. Nevertheless, such was the difficulty of devising any adequate remedy, that, under the newly-constituted system of Revenue Councils, it was determined that the administration of justice should continue as usual. The Council, however, were not only to interpose when necessary, but every transaction of the country government was to come before them. All criminal cases were to be tried in the Adawlut established for that purpose, and their proceedings were to be submitted to the Revenue Council, before the sentence awarded was carried into effect. All causes relating to property in land, and to the revenues, were to be referred to the Khalsa Cutcherry,* and causes for debt to the judicial Adawlut.†

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When the various statements of the falling-off of the revenues, the sufferings of the people, through alleged oppression, inflicted either directly or

* The Revenue Court.

† Consultations, 11th October, 1770. Court of Justice.

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or intermediately, at a time of severe famine, together with the mal-administration of justice, reached the Court of Directors, they were naturally led to connect these circumstances with the grounds for suspicion which they had previously entertained of the character and integrity of Mahomed Reza Cawn. In addition to the public despatches, various *private* representations had been sent home, all calculated to strengthen the doubts entertained of his conduct. The Court accordingly addressed the President and Council at Calcutta* in the following terms:—"At a time when famine was depopulating a country with which we are so immediately connected, and in the prosperity whereof we are so deeply interested, we cannot but highly approve every well-meant and generous effort to relieve the miseries of the poor inhabitants, by whom, in an especial manner, the calamity must have been experienced in all its dreadful consequences; and as we enjoy a very singular pleasure in commending those of our servants whose attention has been turned towards alleviating the general distress, so are we filled with the greatest indignation on finding a charge exhibited against any persons whatever (but especially natives of England), for monopolizing grain, and thereby aggravating the woes, and no doubt increasing the number of wretched mortals, labouring under the most awful circumstances which

Court's orders for Company standing forward as Dewan and for removal of Mahomed Reza Cawn.

* Letter to Bengal, 28th August, 1771.

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which could possibly happen to any people whatsoever. We are led to these reflections by perusing the letters which accuse the Gomastahs of English gentlemen, not barely for monopolizing grain, but for compelling the poor ryots to sell *even the seed requisite for the next harvest.*

"As we have further reasons to suspect that large sums have, by violent and oppressive means, been actually collected by Mahomed Reza Cawn, on account of the Dewanny revenues, great part of which he has appropriated to his own use, or distributed amongst the creatures of his power and the instruments of his oppressions, we should not think ourselves justified to the Company or the public, were we to leave to him in future the management of the Dewanny collections; and as the transferring the like trust to any other minister could yield us little prospect of reaping any benefit from the change, we are necessitated to seek, by other means, the full advantage we have to expect from the grant of the Dewanny. It is, therefore, our determination to stand forth as Dewan, and, by the agency of the Company's servants, to take upon ourselves the entire care and management of the revenues. In confidence therefore, of your abilities to plan and execute this important work, we hereby authorize and require you to divest Mahomed Reza Cawn, and every person employed by or in conjunction with him, or acting under his influence, of any further

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charge or direction in the business of the collections; and we trust that, in the office of Dewan, you will adopt such regulations, and pursue such measures, as shall at once ensure to us every possible advantage, and free the ryots from the oppressions of Zemindars and petty tyrants, under which they may have been suffered to remain, from the interested views of those whose influence and authority should have been exerted for their relief and protection.

"From the grounds we have to suspect that Mahomed Reza Cawn has abused the trust reposed in him, and been guilty of many acts of violence and injustice towards his countrymen, we deem insufficient the depriving him of a station which may be made subservient to the most corrupt purposes. It is, therefore, our pleasure and command, that you enter into a minute investigation, not only of the causes to which the decrease of revenue may be ascribed, but also into Mahomed Reza Cawn's general conduct during the time the Dewanny revenues have been under his charge; and as the several complaints and accusations already noticed to you are of a nature too serious to be suffered to pass over without the most rigid enquiry, we have directed our President to order him to repair to Calcutta, there to answer to the facts which shall be alleged against him, both in respect to his public administration and private conduct."

Mr.

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Mr. Hastings had resided at Calcutta only two months, and had, as already observed, succeeded to the chair but ten days, when the orders of the Court of August reached him in the night of the 24th April. On the following morning, he despatched instructions to Mr. Middleton, at Mootejeyl, desiring, in conformity with the orders of the Secret Committee, that he would arrest the person of Mahomed Reza Cawn, together with his Dewan, Rajah Aumest Sing, and send them down to Calcutta under a sufficient guard. Every mark of tenderness and respect was to be shewn to Mahomed Reza Cawn, consistent with the literal performance of the service. Secrecy was to be observed, in order to avoid all cause for alarm or disturbance.

Arrest of Mahomed Reza Cawn.

Precautions were taken by Mr. Middleton to allay any tumult, but none were required. Mahomed Reza Cawn, on learning the purport of the commission, evinced no inclination to impede the execution of the orders, "but with calm submission met his unhappy fate," manifesting a readiness to comply with them to the fullest extent. He proceeded from Mootejeyl on the 27th, and was to embark at Mirzapore for Calcutta. On the 28th, two days only having elapsed after their receipt, Mr. Hastings laid before Council the instructions from the Secret Committee, under which he had acted. The Board resolved that, consistently with those orders, they could not receive Mahomed Reza

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Reza Cawn with the usual honours. It was proposed, that, in consideration of the rank of "his Excellency," the station he had filled, and the character and consequence he held in the empire, a member of the Board should be deputed to wait upon him, to explain verbally and in general terms the articles laid to his charge. A majority of the Board concurred in this measure. The President and three other members dissented from it, on the ground that it was inconsistent with the proceedings against him. Mr. Hastings had already written to assure Mahomed Reza Cawn of the exceeding grief and mortification which the commands of the Company had caused him; but stated, that he was their servant, and that whatever they ordered it was his duty to obey, "nor could he deviate one tittle from it;" but if, in his private character, he could afford him any testimony of his good will or attachment, he might rest assured he would.

Mr. Middleton was ordered to take charge of the office of Dewan, until a proper plan should be digested by the Council.

Rajah Shatab Roy seized and sent down to Calcutta.

The Board considering that the charge of neglect or embezzlement of the revenues was applied equally to Shatab Roy, the Naib Dewan of the Bahar province, they resolved to lay an immediate restraint upon his person. He was sent down to Calcutta on the 7th May.

Mr. Graham, the member of Council deputed to

to wait upon Mahomed Reza Cawn, met him at Chitpore. Having explained the cause of his mission, the latter expressed much anxiety that no delay should take place in bringing forward the charges to be preferred against him. 1772 BENGAL.

A plan for the future arrangement of the Nabob's affairs was taken up by the Committee at Cossimbuzar, where Mr. Hastings had arrived from the Presidency. The Company having resolved to stand forth as Dewan, a question arose as to the maintenance of the office of Naib Soubah. The Council, after fully considering the various duties which appertained to that station, and referring to the probable state of affairs at the period when the Nabob Maborek-ud-Dowla, who succeeded his brother Syoof-ud-Dowla, in 1770, would reach his majority, were of opinion, that whatever faith might be due to treaties, doubtful in themselves, a divided government could only be productive of the most serious results and continual contests, terminating in anarchy and bloodshed. They, therefore, contemplated the possibility of a total change of rule taking place by degrees, by which the real power that protected the country should be substituted, in lieu of that which claimed the power by right, but was at the same time unable to maintain or support that right. In order to prepare the way for this change, they determined to take such measures as would retain openly in their hands the whole conduct of government, at least for

Arrangement as to the Nabob.

British Sovereignty contemplated.

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for the present, and so to accustom the people to the sovereignty of the British nation.

The office of Naib Soubah was accordingly abolished, and a guardian appointed to the Nabob. The party fixed upon was Munnee Begum, the widow of the late Nabob Jaffier Ally Khan. Her rank was considered to give her a claim to the pre-eminence, without being open to the objection of its interfering with the course of policy to be observed in promoting and extending the British interests. The plan was adopted by the Council at Calcutta.

The next proposition submitted by Mr. Hastings was the selection of Rajah Goordass, the son of Maha-Rajah Nundcomar, for the office of Dewan of the Nabob's household. The grounds urged for this appointment appear to have been the "inveterate and rooted enmity" which had long subsisted between Nundcomar and Mahomed Reza Cawn, and the necessity of employing the vigilance and activity of so penetrating a rival, to counteract the designs of the latter, and to eradicate the influence which he might retain in the government. This measure was considered to be in strict accordance with the instructions from the Court of Directors; who, if they had not so expressed it, had necessarily implied it in their commands, since it was not to be expected that a new plan of government could effectually take place, while the influence of the former subsisted.

The

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The youth and inexperience of Rajah Goordass were stated to render him inadequate to the real purposes of his appointment; but his father was considered to possess all the abilities, perseverance, and temper, requisite for such ends, in a degree, perhaps, exceeding any man in Bengal.

Opposition to arrangements as regarded Nundcomar.

Mr. Barwell entirely concurred in the proposal of Mr. Hastings; but Messrs. Dawes, Lawrell, and Graham objected to the measure. They considered it, in effect, the appointment of Nundcomar, whose previous political conduct, and the orders of the Court of Directors thereon, rendered him, in their judgment, unfit for the part which was suggested by the President. They adverted to his having assisted in carrying on a correspondence between the Shazada and the French governor of Pondicherry, in 1762, and to the fact that he was subsequently proved to have forged letters, with the view of inculpating and ruining a native, named Ram Churn, who had acted as banian to Lord Clive, General Caillaud, and Mr. Vansittart, which led the Court of Directors to remark, that Nundcomar had been guilty of carrying on correspondence with the country powers, "hurtful to the Company's interests; that he appeared to be of a wicked and turbulent disposition, and should not be trusted with his liberty in the Company's settlement." In October, 1764, he was found to have been in treaty

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treaty to furnish Meer Cossim full accounts of all the transactions of the English army, on condition of being appointed to the Dewanny of Bengal; and in March, 1765, Mr. Vansittart had reported his treasonable correspondence with the enemy.

Mr. Hastings' reasons for support of Nundcomar.

In reply to the objections urged against the appointment of Rajah Goordass, Mr. Hastings remarked, that Nundcomar's situation differed materially from that in which he stood under Meer Jaffier. He drew a distinction between the violation of a trust, and an offence committed against a government, to which, at the time, he owed no allegiance; and although he had himself detected the circumstances alleged against Nundcomar,* still he was persuaded that the Court of Directors would attribute his countenancing him to motives of zeal and fidelity to the service, in repugnance, perhaps, to his own inclinations. The father would have no trust or authority, and the son not possessing abilities equal to so great an undertaking, the slightest suspicion would be sufficient to remove the former, and frustrate all hope of his following up any design of moment against the government. The Board at Calcutta unanimously concurred with the Committee of Circuit in the appointment of Munnee Begum, as guardian to the Nabob; but there was a difference of opinion on that of Rajah Goordass, who was

* Vide page 344.

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was, however, nominated by a vote of the majority.

These arrangements were notified to the Court in September 1772, when Mr. Hastings himself addressed the Directors from Cossimbuzar, explaining the circumstances under which Mahomed Reza Cawn and Rajah Shatab Roy had been so long detained in confinement, without any proofs having been obtained of their guilt.

Causes of delay in proceedings against Mahomed Reza Cawn and Rajah Shatab Roy.

"I beg leave to call to your recollection, that by a strange concurrence of unforeseen causes, your administration had at this time every object that could engage the care of government (war only excepted), all demanding their instant attention. The settlement of the revenue of Bengal; the dismission of the Naib Dewan and Naib Soubah of the provinces; the inquiry into his conduct for a course of years preceding; the dismission of the Naib Dewan of Behar, and inquiry into his conduct; the establishment of the Dewanny on the plan directed by the Honourable Company; the arrangement of the Nabob's household; the reduction of his allowance and expenses; the establishment of a regular administration of justice throughout the provinces; the inspection and reformation of the public offices; and, independent of all these, the ordinary duties of the Presidency, which, from the amazing growth of your affairs, were of themselves sufficient to occupy the whole time and application which

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which we could bestow upon them, and even more than we could bestow, from the want of a regular system, the natural consequence of the rapidity with which these affairs have accumulated. So circumstanced, we were under an absolute necessity to leave many affairs suspended, that we might give due despatch to the rest. The first in consequence claimed our immediate regard: this was the settlement of the revenues. It was late in the season. The lands had suffered unheard-of depopulation by the famine and mortality of 1769. The collections, violently kept up to their former standard, had added to the distress of the country, and threatened a general decay of the revenue, unless immediate remedies were applied to prevent it.

"The farming system, for a course of years subjected to proper checks and regulations, seemed the most likely to afford relief to the country, and both to ascertain and produce the real value of the lands without violence to the ryots. It was, therefore, resolved, that this business should first take place; and it was deemed necessary, for this purpose, that a Committee, composed of the members of the Council, should be appointed to carry it into execution. The arrangement of the Dewanny, and the regulation of the Nabob's household, were added to the charge of the Committee; and as these comprehended the most valuable parts of your concerns, it was thought proper that I, as President,

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President, should be joined with it. This rendered it necessary to suspend the trials of Mahomed Reza Cawn and Rajah Shatab Roy, and this reason is assigned for it in our minutes. Neither Mahomed Reza Cawn nor Rajah Shatab Roy complained of the delay as a hardship. Perhaps all parties, as is usual in most cases of a public concern, had their secret views, which, on this occasion, though opposite in their direction, fortunately concurred in the same points. These had conceived hopes of a relaxation of the Company's orders. Mahomed Reza Cawn had even buoyed himself up with the hopes of a restoration to his former authority, by the interests of his friends, and a change in the Direction; and his letters, and the letters of his Dewan to the city, declared these expectations."

This communication to the Court was succeeded by a secret despatch of the 10th December following, in which they were apprized that the alleged balance against Mahomed Reza Cawn, of forty lacs, on account of the Chukla of Dacca, had risen from a mistake, his name having been inserted in the accounts of the year 1762, instead of the name of his predecessor, Mahomed Ally Cawn, and that the former had, as he stated, agreed only for 27,62,765 rupees, in the room of 38,86,242 rupees. The Government nevertheless remarked, "We have great reason to believe that, on a strict scrutiny, there will appear a balance against him of seventeen lacs."

Before

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Before this latter statement had reached the Court of Directors, they had written to Mr. Hastings,* expressing their entire approbation of the measures detailed in his letter from Cossimbuzar, of the 1st September.

Court of Directors entirely approve of the conduct of Mr. Hastings.

"The whole of your conduct seems to have fully justified the choice of the Secret Committee,† who entrusted to your management the execution of a plan of the utmost importance.

"Although you will observe that sundry changes have lately taken place in the direction of the Company's affairs at home, those changes will not in the least affect the measures in which you are engaged: on the contrary, we take this early opportunity, not only of testifying our entire approbation of your conduct, but of assuring you of our firmest support in accomplishing the work you have so successfully commenced; and we doubt not, but it will issue in the deliverance of Bengal from oppression, in the establishment of our credit, influence, and interest, in India, and consequently, in every advantage which the Company or the nation may justly expect from so important a transaction.

"We

* Letter to Mr. Hastings, 16th April 1773.

† The terms in which the tenth article of the seventeenth charge in the impeachment was couched, questions the truth of the assertion made by Mr. Hastings, that he received orders, directed to *himself*, from the Secret Committee. This answer of the Court of Directors puts the fact beyond all doubt.

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"We assure ourselves that you will prosecute your inquiries with steadiness, impartiality, and to full effect, notwithstanding the many difficulties and temptations which, we are sensible, may be thrown in the way of persons engaged in inquiries of this nature, in order to weaken their zeal for the public good, and to render their endeavours ineffectual for the great purposes of reformation.

"Your attention to the settlement of the revenues, as a primary object, has our entire approbation; and it is with the utmost satisfaction we observe that the farming system will be generally adopted; more especially as the researches and discoveries made in the two preceding years must have nearly ascertained the value and produce of the lands; so that imposition on the part of the farmers, respecting the value of the lands and oppression of the tenants, may, we hope, be easily avoided.

"The extirpation of Mahomed Reza Cawn's influence was absolutely necessary, and the apprehending of Shatab Roy equally so. As to any hopes which Mahomed Reza Cawn may entertain of profiting by changes in the Court of Directors, those hopes must speedily vanish; for, however different their sentiments may be in some particulars, they heartily concur in the propriety and necessity of setting him aside, and of putting the administration of the Company's affairs in the hands

1773. BENGAL. hands of persons who may be rendered responsible in England for their conduct in India.

"Your choice of the Begum for guardian to the Nabob, we entirely approve. The use you intend making of Nundcomar is very proper; and it affords us great satisfaction to find, that you could at once determine to suppress all personal resentment, when the public welfare seemed to clash with your private sentiments relative to him.

"As the shortness of our time will not permit us to be more particular, we can only repeat to you our assurances of protection and support, in carrying into full execution the arrangements you have so happily begun; and as we desire particularly that you will distinguish and encourage merit wherever you find it, so do we most strictly conjure you, not to suffer rank, station, or any connexion or consideration whatever, to deter you from bringing every oppression to light, and every offender, native or European, to condign punishment.

"If the abolition of the office of Naib Dewan, and stepping forth as principals, should in any degree alarm your European neighbours, we rely on your prudence for removing every improper jealousy that may be entertained on this account.

"Notwithstanding this letter is signed by us, the Court of Directors, we mean it as secret, and transmit it confidentially to you only; and we leave it to your discretion to lay the contents, or any

any part thereof, before the Council, if circumstances should, in your opinion, render it necessary, or if you should judge it for our interest so to do, and not otherwise." 1773. BENGAL.

Considerable progress had been made, by March, in the inquiries instituted respecting Rajah Shatab Roy and Mahomed Reza Cawn; but the Council foresaw in the latter "a tedious and troublesome business." They observed, "You may depend upon it, that neither pains nor attention shall be wanting to bring it to a conclusion: at present, nothing definitive has been done."*

In the month of August following, the Court were informed of the entire acquittal of the Rajah Shatab Roy, of embezzlement or mismanagement, during the period of his administration; and as the Council were fully satisfied of his great abilities and experience in revenue affairs, they appointed him to act as Roy-royan† of the Bahar province; and the Nabob, at their recommendation, consented to retain him his Naib for the criminal branch of the administration of justice, and to interpose in disputes with foreign nations. Acquittal of Shatab Roy.

He quitted Calcutta in a very bad state of health, and, after languishing some time, died in September. Rajah Kulliam Sing, his son, was appointed to His death.

* Letter to the Directors, March, 1773.

† The principal officer under the Dewan of the Provinces, who has the immediate charge of the crown lands; and Superintendant of the Exchequer.

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to the vacant office of Roy-royan, in testimony of the sense entertained of the merits and services, as well as in consideration of the sufferings, of his father, by whom he had been entrusted with a considerable share in public affairs. The Nabob granted him sunnuds, appointing him Naib of the Nazim for the Bahar province, and confirming to him the title of Maha Rajah.*

Charges not proved against Mahomed Reza Cawn.

With regard to Mahomed Reza Cawn, the first charge only, of monopolizing grain during the famine, had been gone through, and the Council acknowledged that none of the proofs in its support had established his guilt. On the contrary, the belief which prevailed in the country, of his being concerned in that trade, appeared to have arisen from the notions of the people, who, ignorant of the facts, blended and mistook the duties of Mahomed Reza Cawn's public station, in the measures which he pursued for the relief of the city, during the height of famine, for the exertion of sordid views to gratify and promote his private interests.

The second article of charge was the balance against him during the two years that he collected the Dacca revenues. This balance he alleged to be grounded on a document extorted from him, when under bodily fear, by Nundcomar. The latter denied the charge, and still declared that the balance was due, and might be recovered. The

* Letter from Bengal, 10th November, 1773.

The Council determined to call upon Nundcomar for proof of the truth of his allegation. 1774. BENGAL.

At the termination of the examination into the first charge, Mahomed Reza Cawn had undergone fourteen months' confinement. Upon maturely weighing every circumstance, the Council were unanimously of opinion, that full opportunity had been afforded to all persons desirous of accusing him, or of obtaining redress for grievances suffered at his hands, to have appeared to give their testimony, or to make their application, unawed by apprehensions of his power or resentment. The guard which had been placed over him was accordingly removed, on condition that he engaged not to depart from Calcutta till the inquiry was completed. It terminated in March, 1774. The Council stated, that although their opinions amounted to a general acquittal, they had forborne to pronounce them decidedly, but referred them to the Court for final judgment. He was declared free from arrest, but required not to leave the Bengal province until his entire enlargement was authorized by the Court.* Declared free from arrest.

In addition to the address from the Government of the 17th March, Mr. Hastings felt it necessary, in consequence of his having received the especial commands of the Court for conducting the inquiry, to enter into a personal explanation regarding some

* Letter from Bengal, 15th March, 1774.

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some points in the proceedings. He accordingly wrote to the Directors on the 24th of that month, and alluded to the difficulties which he had to encounter "in the progress of that intricate business."

Mr. Hastings' explanation of his conduct as to the proceedings against Mahomed Reza Cawn.

—"I had neither witnesses, nor vouchers, nor materials of any sort to begin with. For these I relied chiefly on the abilities, observation, and active malignity of Maharajah Nundcomar. In concurrence with the Councils at Cossimbuzar and Calcutta, advertisements were published, inviting all persons to give information against such as had contributed to distress the country in the time of famine. I patiently bestowed hours and days in listening to the multiplied but indefinite suggestions of Nundcomar: in a word, I omitted no means, which were consistent with my character, to bring the truth of this accusation to light. In the course of the inquiry, I proceeded with the most rigid impartiality, not suffering (I can safely say) the smallest bias to incline me. You will see with what materials I was furnished. I am sorry to say, that some were collected with so little decency and regard to truth, as to make me apprehensive of the effects which they might have produced, from the countenance afforded to the Political Agent in the prosecution, had I not, in my own immediate conduct, invariably adhered to the strictest rule of justice."

The natives from whom statements had been transmitted home, and to which the Court referred in

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in support of the course they directed to be observed towards Mahomed Reza Cawn, when called to the proof, failed in establishing one iota of the charges against him. The accounts furnished by Nundcomar appeared more calculated to acquit than to afford any proof against him; and although Nundcomar had offered to supply very minute accounts as to the Dacca collections and the Nizamut accounts, and likewise to prove embezzlement in the rate of exchange, none of the papers which he produced afforded any thing like proofs, but merely reiterated charges, without one voucher, or the least aid that could lead to one, in support of them.

"I am at a loss," said Mr. Hastings, "to discover the secret spring which governs the mysterious conduct of this man;" and then, as if in anticipation of what was to befall himself at a future period, he wrote: "Notwithstanding the consciousness which I possess of my own integrity, and the certainty that my conduct throughout this ungrateful business will, on the most rigid scrutiny, do me credit, yet I am not without my fears; I am aware of the violent prejudices which were taken up at once against Mahomed Reza Cawn by all ranks of people, both here and at home. I am also aware that, in England, where the very name of inquiry into the past management of affairs in India, flatters the passion of the times, and raises expectations of great and important detections,

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detections, the result may baulk those expectations, and turn the torrent of clamour another way. In many of the private letters which I received from my friends in England, I was warned to act with great caution in this inquiry, as the confirmation of my credit with the public, and (forgive me for adding) with your Honourable Court, depended upon it. The magnitude of the charges which were alleged against Mahomed Reza Cawn, his reputed wealth, the means which that afforded him, both of suppressing evidence, and even of influencing his judges in his favour, and the natural conclusion deducible from so many exaggerated accusations, that some part of them, at least, was true, gave additional force to these cautionary intimations, and made me fear for the consequences, not only as they might affect my reputation, which it has been the study of my life to maintain unblemished, but as they might blast all my hopes from the continuation of your favour, which I hold solely on the credit of my integrity. I must candidly own, that I never gave up a portion of my time to this business, without feeling a painful regret that so much of it was lost to the care of your real interests."

Duplicity of Nundcomar.

He then adverted to the dark and deceitful character of Nundcomar, whose gratitude no kindness could bind, nor even his own interest disengage from the crooked politics which had been

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been the study of his whole life. "Before my departure from Fort St. George, when my appointment to this Presidency was known, a messenger, expressly deputed from Munnee Begum, came to me there, with letters from her, entreating my protection in the most earnest terms, both for her house and for the people of Bengal, against the tyranny of Mahomed Reza Cawn, and referring for further information to Maharajah Nundcomar, from whom I received similar addresses on the same subject and by the same hand. The Munnee Begum has since solemnly disavowed ever having written such letters, or authorized such a communication.

"A short time after the elevation of his son as Dewan to the Nabob, Nundcomar sent drafts of letters to the Begum, which he recommended her to write to me, enumerating the many encroachments which had been made by the English Government on the rights of the Nizamut, and reclaiming them on behalf of the Nabob. I trust to his own genius to furnish you with nearer proofs, in the representations which he has already made, or which he may at this time convey to your knowledge." In closing the letter, Mr. Hastings observed: "Whatever your resolution may be concerning the future fate of Mahomed Reza Cawn, it is my duty (although I believe it unnecessary) to represent that, whatever reparation you may think due for his past sufferings, the restoration

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restoration of any part of the power which he before possessed, will inevitably tend to the injury of the Company's affairs, and the diminution of your influence and authority. There can be but one government and one power in the province. Even the pretensions of the Nabob may prove a source of embarrassment, when he is of age to claim his release from the present state of pupil-age which prevents his asserting them."

British Government must be supreme.

In connexion with this last passage, which is in accordance with the views entertained by Mr. Hastings, on framing the arrangement by which Munnee Begum and Rajah Goordass received their respective appointments of guardian and dewan to the Nabob, it is necessary to bear in mind what passed when the Nabob Nazim-ood-Dowla was supported in his succession to the musnud, on the death of his father, Meer Jaffier, in 1765.*

The acquisition of the Dewanny, which shortly followed, led to the further extension of the British authority: but the assumption of the office of Dewan by the Company was productive of far greater changes in the native system of administration than any measure by which it had been preceded.

Conduct of Mr. Hastings and the Council fully approved.

The conduct of Mr. Hastings and of his Council, throughout the whole course of the proceedings regarding Mahomed Reza Cawn and Shatab Roy,

* *Vide* page 98.

Roy, was fully approved by the Court of Directors, who observed, that the general and alarming accounts of the oppressions rendered a scrutiny into their conduct indispensable. The Governor and Council had expressed a belief that the inquiry would issue in proving a large balance to be due; the Court, therefore, felt authorized to conclude, that there must have been such public and general appearances of mal-administration, as warranted the course they had adopted; but as they wished Mahomed Reza Cawn to remain under no other obligations than those of "*gratitude*," they did not object to his total enlargement.* 1769. BENGAL.

The original instructions to Mr. Hastings, of August 1771, were peremptory and decided; he obeyed them promptly and literally; but the whole of the proceedings exhibit the baneful effects of acting in any degree upon private and unofficial representations, and awaken feelings of deep sympathy for the sufferings of a distinguished native, who had been subjected to so protracted and severe an ordeal, terminating in the entire failure of his enemies to establish any one of the charges so unjustly brought against him. Sympathy awakened in behalf of Mahomed Reza Cawn.

Amidst other important matters which engaged the attention of Mr. Hastings and his Council, were the negotiations with the Vizier, followed by the Rohilla war. 1772.

The

* Letter to Bengal, 3d March 1775.

1772. BENGAL. Incursions of the Mahrattas.

The Court of Directors had received with much concern the statement of the incursions made by the Mahrattas, not only into the territories of the King, but those of Shuja Dowla, to part of which they had also laid claim.* They regarded the conduct of the Rohillas and Jauts as a matter of regret rather than surprise, the King and Vizier having neglected the opportunity to unite with those powers for the purpose of repelling the Mahrattas, who were the common disturbers of the empire. To whatever causes this general timidity or supineness was owing, the Company's interests were equally affected, and the tranquillity of the provinces endangered. Still, the projects of the King and the Vizier were of too mysterious a character to enable the Court to decide as to the motives of their inactivity; and as they could not know what alliances might be formed to justify the carrying the Company's arms beyond the bounds of their dominions, they felt precluded from proposing any precise plan for the guidance of the Council, but trusted that their sole object would be the security of the Company's possessions, and those of the powers with whom they were connected, both by treaty and interest; and as this appeared to have guided their conduct, upon the Mahrattas invading the province of Corah, the measures which they had adopted for defending the dominions of the King and Vizier from

* *Vide* page 280, *et seq.*

from their inroads and depredations, were fully approved.*

Vizier consults Sir Robert Barker.

The Vizier at length found his position towards the Mahrattas so critical, that he was induced to seek an interview with General Sir Robert Barker, to discuss the measures most prudent to be pursued for the preservation of his interests. He was also desirous of adjusting some points connected with the cession to the Company of the fortress of Chunagur. They accordingly met at Fyzabad. The Vizier persisted in his determination not to obey the summons of the King for his attendance at Delhi. He felt that, if he joined his Majesty, he should be merely an idle spectator of the enterprize preparing by the Mahrattas against the Rohillas; and in the event of the latter being compelled to surrender a large portion of their country, his own possessions would be placed in jeopardy by the proximity of the enemy, while an alliance might, at the same time, take place between them and the Rohillas against himself. In order to avert these consequences, he resolved to open a negociation with the Rohillas. To give weight to this proposition, he entreated Sir Robert Barker to accompany him on the expedition. The Council, anxious to bring matters to a pacific termination, acceded to this request. The Rohillas appeared ready to make a cession of part of their territory to him, on condition of his supporting Zabita

Declines to join the King.

Views in support of the Rohillas, who are defeated by the Mahrattas.

* Letter to Bengal, August 1771.

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Zabita Cawn, then at Succurtaul, guarding the fords of the Ganges against the Mahrattas, who had prevailed on the King to oppose him. A body of the former, under Madajee Scindia, amounting to 40,000 men, advanced within sixteen coss of the fords. Having taken every precaution to ensure their passage, they crossed under cover of their cannon, and entirely defeated the Rohillas. Finding Succurtaul abandoned by Zabita Cawn, who sought safety in flight, they followed up their success by penetrating to the very heart of Rohilcund.

Apprehensions of the Vizier.

Had the Vizier not been encouraged by the presence of Sir R. Barker at this juncture, he was prepared to have submitted to the most humiliating terms to purchase his security. Conduct so opposite to his general ardour, and with a well appointed army, was attributed to the disaffection which his troops had of late so frequently manifested towards him. The general enabled the Vizier to place his affairs on the frontiers on a respectable footing; but being apprehensive that the Mahrattas might attempt to penetrate into the dominions of Oude, he ordered the first brigade, then at Patna, to pass the Caramnassa.* The Council disapproved of this step, as no requisition had

* This river separates the province of Bahar from that of Benares. On crossing this river, the Company's officers were considered to have quitted the Company's territories, and received an additional allowance, in consideration of their distance from the Presidency.

had been made by the Vizier either to the Council or to the Commander-in-chief, for aid, nor had any stipulation been entered into for the Vizier's paying the extra expenses to be incurred by the movement. 1772. BENGAL.

The fort of Chunagur being at length ceded to the Company for as long a term as they might desire to hold it, one of their battalions took possession; their troops were also to remain at Allahabad, the Vizier requiring that his colours should be exhibited on the walls merely as an acknowledgement of his authority. These measures necessarily led to our passing the boundary which had been so long laid down as the line within which the Company's operations were to be confined. Cession of Chunagur to the Company.

The Mahrattas limited their incursion to laying waste the Rohilla country, retiring at the commencement of the rains. The Rohilla chiefs, Hafiz Rhamet and Zabita Cawn, fled precipitately towards the northern hills, and others had surrendered to Scindia. The Vizier subsequently entered into a treaty with the Rohillas through Hafiz Rhamet, by which, on paying him forty lacs of rupees, he was to take an active part in their defence. The Mahrattas did not object, provided they received their *chout*. They even offered the Vizier part of the conquered territories from the Rohillas, contiguous to his own, retaining for themselves the tract of land to the westward of the Dispersion of the Rohilla chiefs. Vizier agrees to support Rohillas.

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the Ganges and Zabita Cawn's country, which had already been made over to the King. He then made a formal requisition to the Council for aid, which they declined, not feeling bound by treaty to engage with him in distant schemes wholly opposed to the course of policy they had determined to pursue. They resolved to keep the treaty with him inviolate, but disapproved of offensive measures, intending to avoid, without absolute necessity to the contrary, all military operations foreign to the immediate defence of the Company's provinces; but they were apprehensive that the ambition of the Mahrattas would bring the period of interference nearer than they could wish. They had already overrun the Rohilla country, and they regarded the King, who was virtually in their possession, solely as the instrument of their own aggrandizement. So far from re-establishing him in his government, they positively refused to keep their engagement of sharing with him half the spoils; and having extorted from him sunnuds for Meerut, they left him almost destitute, in the midst of a rich and plentiful camp, even of the common necessaries required to support at least an appearance of dignity.

Council refuse to co-operate.

Mahrattas' treatment of the King.

His Majesty at this time evinced a desire to reunite himself to his former allies; but, at the moment of making this profession, he was suggesting to the Mahrattas the necessity of their sowing

Duplicity of the King.

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sowing dissensions between the Vizier and the Council, in order the more effectually to promote the success of their own movements.

Mahrattas' opposition to the treaty between Vizier and Rohillas.

The negociations between the Rohillas and the Vizier were scarcely terminated, when the Mahrattas, finding themselves excluded, and that a treaty of defence had been entered into against them, determined to revenge themselves on Shuja Dowla, and demanded, as the terms for preserving tranquillity, the cession of Corah, Allahabad, and Benares, the abandonment of his settlement with the Rohillas, the discharge of all sums which the King stood indebted to them, and, lastly, that the Vizier should unite with them against every opponent.

The Vizier first announced this intelligence to the Council in July, and requested a body of troops for his support. The President stated that a defensive course could alone be adopted; but, in order to allay his fears, the first brigade was directed to join him: he also wrote to Mhadarao and Bysajee, the Mahratta chiefs, acquainting them with the extreme dissatisfaction of the Council at the hostile demonstration towards the Vizier, and that, by treaty, the Company were bound to defend his territories against every invader.

Council expostulate with Mahrattas.

The Council, in communicating these proceedings to the Court, stated it to be their unanimous determination, that no object or consideration should

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should tempt or compel them to pass the political line which they had laid down for their operations with the Vizier, which were to be defensive only, and the army was not to be carried beyond the borders of the Vizier's territories; adding, "to this resolution we shall steadily adhere."

Difference between Mahratta chiefs.

The Mahratta chiefs having espoused different interests in the distribution of Zabita Cawn's country, Bysajee and Tokajee broke up their camp at Coel, and proceeded towards Delhi, for the purpose of intimidating the King into a compliance with their respective demands on the Rohillas. His Majesty, influenced by Scindia, opposed all their measures, he would not consent to their interfering in the settlement of the Rohilla affairs, without the previous concurrence of Mhadarao; and intimated that the Vizier ought to be considered the ostensible person in the negociations.

The King opposes them, and is defeated.

He was also extremely irritated at the march of the chiefs, and collected a body of troops, in order to oppose them, should they attempt other means than that of negociation. Neither party giving way, a battle took place, in which the King was completely defeated, and again placed at the entire mercy of the Mahrattas.

Defeat of the Jauts by the Mahrattas.

Scindia pursued his success against the Jauts, who suffered from the defection of a Mr. Maddox, an active officer in their service, formerly a deserter from the English army, having gone over from the Jauts with a considerable force to the King.

At

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Council determine to include Corah within line of defensive operations.

At the earnest solicitation of the Vizier, Colonel Champion was ordered to join him with the first brigade. A bridge of boats was thrown over the river at Benares to facilitate the progress of the troops. His instructions were accompanied by an injunction, that "not a single sepoy was to pass the frontiers of the Vizier's territories." Colonel Champion replaced the first with the second of the brigades at Dinagepore.

The King's affairs in connexion with the Mahrattas, who had extorted from his Majesty a formal surrender of the provinces of Corah and Currah, secured to him for the support of his dignity and expenses, under the treaty of 1765, were at this time fully entered into by the President. The subject having been freely canvassed, and the Court's views, of August 1771,* specially referred to, the Council determined to include those provinces within the line of defensive operations. Colonel Champion was accordingly authorized to cross the river at Allahabad, either with the whole brigade, or such part of it as he might judge proper for the service. Precise instructions were given to Sir Robert Barker on no account to commence hostilities with the Mahrattas, but to confine his operations to the Corah province, and not to cross the line, nor to engage in an offensive war. If the Mahrattas should have begun a war by actual

* *Vide* pages 284-287.

1773. BENGAL. actual invasion, then he was to be at full liberty to adopt such measures for repelling them as he might judge most proper, even to passing the borders of Corah, to attack with advantage. On the service being completed, he was to return within the previous limits. The Vizier was to assign the revenues of Ghazeepore, or some other adequate security, for the payment of the additional charge occasioned by these movements for his defence.

Appoint a superintendent of Corah, &c.

On the 26th April, instructions were approved by the Council to Mr. Lawrell, a member of the Board, desiring him to proceed, in the character of superintendent, and receive charge from General Sir Robert Barker, of the province of Corah, and such part of the Allahabad province as was confirmed to the King by the treaty of 1765.

Munerah-ud-Dowlah was to be maintained as the King's Naib in the actual government, but under the control of the superintendent. The appointment of Mr. Lawrell was to take place in the most public manner, in order that no doubt should exist as to the intention of the Council to maintain the Company's influence and participation in the affairs and revenues of the province, and to establish a right to the future disposal of it in the most equitable manner, when it might become matter of negociation.

Sir Robert Barker was informed, that the great and important duties of his station, and the distance to which the operations had drawn him, precluded

precluded the Council from availing themselves of the continuance of his services in the Corah province. Previously to the receipt of the above communication from the Council, Sir Robert Barker had addressed them on the ill-consequences which he considered to have arisen from civil servants interfering with the employment of the military stationed in the provinces.

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Sir Robert Barker complains of the interference of civil servants with military officers.

In all instructions issued by the Council, the greatest caution had been inculcated as to the bearing to be observed by civil servants towards the military. The ardour of Mr. Penling, a civilian, in an affair at Chittacottah, had carried him a little beyond the mere line of his civil duty, but rather to his praise than censure: the civilian's duty being to point out the service to be performed; but the military, to judge of the mode of performing it. The matter was taken up very warmly by the General. The Committee of Circuit bore the strongest testimony to the delicacy observed by Mr. Penling towards the military: according to the rule, he had done nothing more than become the channel of conveying the orders to the military officers. The General stated that the officers had become dejected, and that, when it was generally known that they were under the civilians, "none but men of infamous character would accept the Company's service."*

Explanations of Council.

The

* Consultations, 3d March, 1773.

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The General was apprised by the Council that the orders of the Company were clear and explicit: that obedience to the civil power was a condition of the acceptance of the service; and that the circumstance of the retreat alluded to by the General from Buxydar, was executed by the military officer, and not by the civil servant.

Further differences.

Another circumstance unfortunately occurred in the following month, which tended to increase the misunderstanding between Sir Robert Barker and the Council. It related to Captain Harper's recal from the Court of the Vizier, where he had been for some time stationed, his services being no longer deemed expedient at that post. Notwithstanding this determination had been made known to Sir Robert Barker, he thought proper to send Captain Harper again to the Vizier, for the purpose of transacting business with his Excellency, giving him the command of the Vizier's grenadier sepoys. He had also received instructions, through the general's secretary, to remain at Mongheer or Patna till he joined him, notwithstanding the public order of the Board, that Captain Harper was not to be engaged in any way in the Vizier's service.

Sir Robert Barker's reasons for desiring to resign.

The General entered into various explanations on points connected with differences that had arisen upon military etiquette, and desired to repair to the Presidency, in order to resign the service; stating, "it is now, from many concomitant circumstances, become impracticable for the commanding

manding officers of the forces to execute what I imagine our honourable employers expect from such an office,—*viz.* to regulate the conduct, manners, and discipline of the officers and soldiers of their army in Bengal, and for other reasons which I shall communicate to the Board." * 1773. BENGAL.

The Council replied to this communication in the following terms: "We solemnly declare, that we know no instance in which we have either attempted to weaken your authority or deprive you of the means to execute this essential part of your trust, or where we have refused our support to any measure, by which you might advance the credit or improvement of the military corps. The instance to which alone the charge seems applicable (we mean, the power granted to the civil servants of the Company, of commanding the military forces) cannot be a motive for you to give up so important and honourable a station, and to deprive the Company of your services, since you express your entire satisfaction in the line which we have laid down for the conduct of all military operations which shall be undertaken under the control of the civil servants. If we have contributed in any other instances to impel you to so abrupt and extraordinary a resolution, we request that you will acquaint us very fully with the particulars, that we may be enabled to vindicate our conduct Council's reply.

* Letter to Council from Sir R. Barker, 12th January 1773.

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conduct to our superiors. The temper of the times obliges us to this caution and requisition. We see the characters of the Company's servants indiscriminately branded with the most atrocious crimes, founded on vague and indefinite hints, with which they have too liberally furnished the public against each other, and often on circumstances either wholly unknown or unnoticed in the Company's records. It becomes, therefore, our duty to guard against the possibility of every such attack, by fixing every imputation upon our conduct, however remote, to the facts and circumstances o which it may allude."

The General urged, that his powers as Commander-in-chief had been lowered; and, although appointments might be made to particular offices by the Council at the Presidency, yet that the recommendation should always have come through him, as the Commander-in-chief; that he should have been invested with the power of bestowing rewards as well as inflicting punishments; and if the President and Council, and the *President by himself,* take upon them the sole arrangements of corps, the nomination of every post in the army, the forming of every detachment, and the appointment of every officer to command, there was no occasion for any Commander-in-chief.

Mr. Hastings' Minute in reply to Sir Robert Barker.

Mr. Hastings being absent when this letter from the General was received by the Council, the subject was taken up on his return to the Presidency. He

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He recorded a minute, in which he observed, that the objections taken by the General to the extension of the civil authority, was rather to the abuse of that power than to the power itself.

"I have neither employed it to gratify personal resentment nor personal favour, having made it a rule, from which I have never varied but at the instance of the General himself, to promote every officer according to his rank in the service. Whatever cause I may have to conceive myself unfairly treated in the reflections cast upon me by the General, I mean only to vindicate myself in this reply. Had he, on any occasion in which he judged me to have encroached on the line of his duty, acquainted me with it, he would have found me disposed to hear him with candour and to repair my own inadvertency. I am not ashamed to acknowledge my errors; because, from the variety and rapid succession of affairs which occupy my attention, I have less time and power of recollection, and, of course, am more liable to error, than any person in the service."

He then laid down what he considered to be the general principles which should govern their proceedings:—

"The collective body of the Council are, or ought to be, possessed of an absolute and uncontrollable authority over every office and every department of the government; but in all the detail of business, and in the execution of their orders which

1773. BENGAL. which they have entrusted to others, they should impose upon themselves the rule of avoiding to interfere but on every necessary occasion, of which they can only be the judges.

"The powers of the Council devolve on the Governor during the intervals of the meeting of the Board, with the same cautionary reserve in respect to the detail and executive business, and with the exception of such matters as, either by express rule, by usage, or by their evident importance, are only cognizable by the Board."

The Council collectively felt called upon to record the most ample testimony to the candour with which the President had replied to the General's statements, and to his conduct having been strictly regulated by the principles of equity and moderation, in no instance exceeding the usage of his predecessors.

Mr. Lawrell assumes charge of Corah.

Mr. Lawrell took formal possession, on the 26th June, of the provinces of Corah and Allahabad, and their dependencies, in the name of the Company, acting as allies to the King, Shah Alum. Had the encroachment of the Mahrattas been tacitly acquiesced in, their power would have been firmly established in the Dooab and in Rohilcund. The only barrier between them and the Company was the Vizier; and it was apparent, from his conduct on the occasion of the former defeat of the Rohillas by Madajee Scindia, in 1772,

1772, that his continued adherence could not have been expected unless supported by the Company's forces. 1773. BENGAL.

He had repeatedly expressed a desire for an interview with the President, to concert measures for opposing the Mahrattas. The Council, feeling that such a meeting might prove advantageous to the Company's affairs, resolved that Mr. Hastings should proceed to Benares. He accordingly left Calcutta on the 25th June. The circumstances attending the connexions with the King and the Vizier being liable to so many variations, the Council felt it to be impossible to mark out any precise line for the guidance of Mr. Hastings, in whose experience and abilities they reposed the most entire confidence. A revision of the existing treaties between the Company and the Vizier, which were felt to be based on an unequal footing, was one of the leading objects, as the latter might call upon the Company for assistance, and yet was under no defined obligation to defray the additional charge thrown upon them by affording him such assistance. Mr. Hastings' visit to the Vizier.

The King having originally proceeded to Delhi against the earnest remonstrance of the Council, they considered that, so long as he continued there, all engagements between his Majesty and the Company were dissolved. The permanent retention of the provinces of Corah and Allahabad by the Company, would have been both inconvenient

1773. BENGAL. convenient and expensive, whilst their proximity to the possessions of the Vizier rendered them an eligible exchange with him for Chunar and Ghazeepore.

In the event of the King renewing his alliance with the Company, they were prepared to restore to him those provinces, upon his renouncing the tribute of twenty-six lacs from Bengal and Bahar and re-uniting himself with the Vizier, to whom the management of the provinces was to be confided.

Mr. Hastings, during his journey towards Benares, repeatedly urged the King to send some one to meet him, with full powers to treat on his affairs. His Majesty, instead of complying with the request, wrote to the Vizier and Munerah-ud-Dowlah, demanding the balance of the tribute and its regular payment for the future; also requiring that the provinces should be restored to Munerah-ud-Dowlah on his behalf.

Treaty with the Vizier. Mr. Hastings reached Benares on the 19th August, and, on the 7th September, concluded a final treaty with the Vizier, by which the districts of Corah and Allahabad were ceded to him, on condition of his paying fifty lacs of rupees to the Company; twenty in ready money, and the remaining thirty lacs in two years, in two equal payments; and defraying the charges on account of any of the Company's forces which he might require, the same being fixed at two lacs ten thousand per month for a brigade. The Vizier, at the

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the instance of Mr. Hastings, renewed with Cheyt Sing the engagements made with his father Bulwunt Sing, in 1764, excepting the additional tribute of two and a-half lacs of rupees, to which Cheyt Sing had agreed, on his accession to the Raj, in 1770. Application was again made to the Vizier for the dismissal of M. Gentil, although Mr. Hastings was of opinion that "the man" had acquired importance from the notice taken of him, rather than from his real power to affect our interests. It was arranged that a Resident should be appointed to the Court of the Vizier from the Presidency.

Mr. Hastings rejoins the Council and reports result.

The Vizier left Benares the 10th September, on which day Mr. Hastings departed for Chunar, where he fixed the boundary of the lands appertaining to the fort. He then proceeded to Patna, for the purpose of acquiring information respecting the saltpetre-manufactories; and resumed his seat at the Board on the 4th October, when he submitted a detailed report of his proceedings, and adverted to what had passed between the Vizier and himself, as to the appointment of a Resident at the Court of Oude, from the Governor in Council.

"In the course of our conversation, the Vizier frequently expressed the satisfaction which he had received from our meeting, and from the friendly and confidential intercourse which had taken place between us. Though such professions are not always

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that influence with him which I have taken much pains to establish, and I hope not altogether unsuccessfully."

Council approve of Mr. Hastings' conduct.

The Council congratulated the President on the successful termination of his mission, which they considered to be most beneficial for the Company's interests, and declared that the treaty had been framed in strict accordance with the system recognized by the Court for maintaining and strengthening an alliance with the Vizier, whose dominions formed the natural barrier for the security of the Company's provinces. They also agreed to delegate to Mr. Hastings the power of nominating an agent to reside at his court, whenever, in his judgment, circumstances might require it: the party to be approved by the Board, the power of recal being left to Mr. Hastings, who was to notify its exercise to the Board.

Authorize him to appoint a resident with Vizier.

Sir Robert Barker dissents from the treaty with the Vizier.

Sir Robert Barker arrived at Calcutta on the 7th October, and took his seat in Council, when he recorded his dissent from the arrangement which had been made at Benares, contrary, in his judgment, to the treaty of Allahabad of 1765. Mr. Hastings replied to the General's objections, and contended that the districts of Corah and Allahabad had been bestowed on Shah Alum for the support of his dignity and expenses. That the King first abandoned, and afterwards, by a solemn grant, gave them away to the Mahrattas, who were more dangerous neighbours. In resuming

Mr. Hastings justifies that measure.

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suming these provinces, the Government did so, not from the King, whose property and rights were annulled by his own alienation of them, but from the Mahrattas. If it was repugnant to the treaty to possess these provinces from the King, it was equally so to oppose the Mahrattas, who by force obtained them from the King, a mere pageant in their hands. The sunnuds for the Dewanny could in no way be considered dependent upon the possession of Corah and Allahabad by the King. The General observed, "that it was more than probable that we should soon see these sunnuds in the hands of other nations." Mr. Hastings asked, "What will they avail them? It was not the want of the sunnuds of Shah Alum which defeated the long-concerted projects of the Duc de Choiseul, nor will the possession of them quicken the designs of the Mahrattas against us. *The sword, which gave* us the dominion of Bengal, must be the instrument of its preservation; and if (which God forbid) it shall ever cease to be ours, the next proprietor will derive his right and possession from the same natural charter.

"Opinions of what might have been done, always have an advantage in the comparison with what has been done. Any conjectures may be hazarded of the probable consequences of the former; no events can refute them: the latter are fixed to certain and unavoidable proofs. I feel the force of this inequality in the present argument

ment with the General. I can only oppose my own opinions to his conjectures, which cannot overthrow them. The measures which I have adopted can at this time admit of no amendment, nor can any reasoning avert the effects, although it will always be easy to infer every disappointment, and every ill-consequence, as the necessary deductions from them." 1773. BENGAL.

The General charged Mr. Hastings with having excluded him from the commission to treat with the Vizier, and with bringing him to Benares merely to lessen his consequence in the eyes of the natives. The act of exclusion was, however, that of the Council, and not of Mr. Hastings; who immediately on his arrival detailed to the General, very circumstantially, the subject and design of his commission and his instructions, of which the General had expressed his full approbation in every part, excepting that more notice had not been taken of him in it. To this remark Mr. Hastings very frankly replied, that the Vizier was little acquainted with the regular powers and constitution of the government; that he had, in fact, placed no dependence upon the government, but had made all his applications to the Commander-in-chief; and that it was intended to convince the Vizier that his immediate dependence was on the government alone, and to establish a communication direct with him, without intervention.

These

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These unprofitable differences were scarcely terminated, when circumstances arose which led to the Company's troops taking part in the operations against the Rohillas.

Vizier meditates operations against the Rohillas.

On the 18th November, a letter was received by the Council from the Vizier, representing that Hafiz Rhamet Khan, and other Rohilla sirdars, intended to take possession of Etawah and the rest of the country belonging to the Mahrattas in the Dooab.

His letter to the Council.

"I therefore write to inform you, that if such is their intention, I will not put up with it, but shall, undoubtedly, undertake an expedition against them; for, in the first place, they have not made good a single *daum* (the fortieth part of a rupee) of the forty lacs of rupees, according to their agreement; and, in the next, they are now going to take possession of another country. This I will never submit to, and I am, therefore, determined to punish them.

"On condition of the entire expulsion of the Rohillas, I will pay to the Company the sum of forty lacs of rupees in ready money, whenever I shall discharge the English troops; and until the expulsion of the Rohillas shall be effected, I will pay the expenses of the English troops; that is to say, I will pay them the sum of 2,10,000 monthly."

Council's determination as to the Dooab and the Rohillas.

To the first proposition respecting the Dooab,* the

* The *Dooab* signifies a tract of land formed by the approximation and junction of two rivers. That formed by the Ganges and Jumna rivers is so called.

the Council had no hesitation in giving a direct negative. The second they considered to involve many points connected with the political interests of the Company in those parts, and therefore called for serious deliberation. 1773. BENGAL.

The power of the Rohillas had long been thought dangerous to the Vizier, the only useful ally of the Company. The Council acknowledged their ignorance of the Rohilla states generally, and, consequently, that their reports to the Directors must have been too defective to have enabled them to form an accurate opinion, although such reports had led the Court to rank them amongst the powers capable of opposing the Mahrattas.* Their country was stated to be so remote from that of the Mahrattas, that the latter might occasionally attack them by allurement of plunder, but would never form a systematic scheme of conquest of a possession so difficult to hold. On the other hand, the Vizier would always be an object of jealousy and apprehension to the Rohillas; and it was more probable that the Mahrattas and Rohillas should unite in hostilities against Oude, than continue at war with each other.†

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* *Vide* page 198.

† An interesting report on Rohilcund will be found in the 1st vol. of the Revenue and Judical Collections, selected under the orders of the Directors in 1820, and printed for the use of the Court and their servants. The Report was made to the Supreme Government on the 13th April 1808, by the Board of Commissioners, R. W. Cox, Esq. and H. St. George Tucker, Esq.

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The advantages anticipated from an expedition against the Rohillas were, the placing the possessions of the Vizier in a complete and compact state; and shutting them in from foreign invasion by the Ganges, from the frontiers of Bahar to the mountains of Thibet, at the same time that they would remain equally accessible to the Company's forces, either for hostilities or protection. The Vizier would also acquire wealth, of which the Company might partake, and his security would be increased, without any dangerous increase of power; for, by bringing his frontier nearer to the Mahrattas, to whom singly he would be no match, he would be rendered more dependent on the Company. Among other considerable benefits were, the acquisition of the forty lacs, and the immediate ease to the Company of the burthen of one-third of their whole army.

Notwithstanding these reasons in favour of the expedition, upon general principles, some doubts were entertained by the President as to its expediency

Esq. both then of the Bengal Civil Service; the latter now a member of the Court of Directors. Rohilcund formed part of the ceded territories acquired by the Company, through treaty with the Nabob Vizier, and is described in the Report as "the most productive and valuable of the late acquisition." Sugar is in great abundance and of excellent quality, and when the transit duties which embarrass the cultivation shall be regulated, it will become a valuable article of export. "The management of Fizula Cawn was celebrated throughout the country. It was described as that of an enlightened and liberal landlord."

diency at that time, "the Company being exposed at home to popular clamour; all their measures being liable to be canvassed in Parliament; their charter drawing to a close, and his Majesty's ministers being unquestionably ready to take advantage of every favourable circumstance in the negociation for its renewal. In this situation, there appears an unusual degree of responsibility annexed to such an undertaking." 1773. BENGAL.

Mr. Hastings felt the embarrassing position in which he was placed, from what had passed with the Vizier at Benares, and the assurance given him of aid in the enterprize.

The Council having deliberately considered the various circumstances stated by the President, "concurred heartily in wishing to avoid the expedition." They admitted the advantages that would accrue to the Company, but felt the objections to preponderate. Still, the honour of the Company's government being concerned, they agreed upon a letter to the Vizier, couched in terms rather calculated to produce a refusal on his part to accept of aid, than to promote the undertaking.* Orders were at the same time sent for the brigade at Dinapore to await the requisition of the Vizier.

The letter produced the desired effect. His Excellency declined the proffered aid in his distant expeditions, on the conditions required of him; but Vizier declines Company's aid.

* Consultations, 26th November 1773.

1773. BENGAL. but requested that the brigade should be ready to march, whenever he might summon it, for the defence of his own dominions. He then advanced into the Dooab. Etawah, being defended by only a small body of Mahrattas, surrendered at discretion. He treated the garrison with great moderation, but ordered the fortifications to be demolished.

Succeeds in the Dooab.

This success, added to his large and apparently formidable army, in the absence of the Mahrattas, who had marched to the Deccan, where serious divisions had arisen amongst their leaders, enabled the Vizier to pass through an enemy's country with as little interruption as if he had been in progress through his own dominions. At the same time, Nujiff Cawn, the King's general, who supported the remains of the royal authority, having defeated the Jauts, and being recovered from the wounds which he had received in the action with them, advanced to invest Agra,* the capital city of the Jauts. The Vizier was obliged to contribute to this operation, for the sake of appearances, and accordingly despatched part of his troops, with some guns. Agra capitulated on the 15th February, and was taken possession of by Nujiff Cawn, in the King's name, on the 17th March.

King's troops defeat the Jauts and capture Agra.

1774.

A requisition having been made by the Vizier for the brigade to advance from Patna, orders were accordingly

* Now the seat of a Lieutenant-Governor under the Company for the Western Provinces!

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accordingly given for its being placed under the command of Colonel Champion. The Vizier agreed to the terms already stated. The troops to be employed only in his own country, or in that of the Rohillas, lying between the Ganges and the mountains. The monthly subsidy of two lacs ten thousand to be paid, and the forty lacs, when the operations against the Rohillas were concluded.

Requisition from Vizier for the brigade to advance against Rohilcund.

Colonel Champion was apprized by the Council that the express purpose for which the Vizier had demanded aid was the reduction of the Rohilla country lying between the Ganges and the mountains. On reaching the Vizier's country, he was to acquaint his Excellency that he was ready to proceed on the service, for which he required his further instructions. The Council did not suppose that the Vizier would find time, after his operations in the Dooab, to attempt the conquest of Rohilcund; but, in the possible event of his prosecuting that enterprize, Colonel Champion was desired not to pass the boundary which divides the province of Oude from the Rohillas, except at the express requisition of the Vizier; in which case, he was to confine all his operations to that country, and to the dominions of his Excellency. He was not, upon any account whatever, to permit the troops, or any part of them, to pass the river Ganges from the Rohilla country, nor the boundaries of the Vizier's dominions, comprehending his ancient

Instructions to Col. Champion.

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ancient possessions of Oude, and the new acquisitions of Corah and Allahabad. He was to seek a personal interview to concert the intended operations in which the Company's forces were to be employed. He was publicly to declare that he went only to meet the Vizier, and with no intention of joining in any measures against the Mahrattas. In the event of the subsidy being one month in arrear in payment to the troops, Colonel Champion was to retire with his forces to Benares, there to await the orders of the Council.

He took leave on the 21st February, and immediately proceeded to the command of the army.

Troops cross the Caramnassa and defeat the Rohillas.

The troops crossed the Caramnassa on the 24th March; and having advanced through the Vizier's dominions, encountered the enemy on the 22d April, when a decisive action was fought, in which a considerable number of the Rohilla army were killed, including their leader, Hafiz Rhamet, who fell, together with one of his sons, whilst bravely rallying his people. The Vizier was represented to have evinced the most "shameful pusillanimity."

Colonel Champion having addressed the Council as to the ulterior views of the Vizier, and the course to be adopted in the event of the King advancing a claim to any portion of the Rohilla country, the majority resolved that the King should be opposed, as he was, in fact, a mere instrument in the hands of the Mahrattas.

Accounts

Accounts of severity of conduct, on the [illegible] Hin- 1774.
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Champion that it had b[illegible] intestine divisions and
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inte[illegible] us to adopt this new plan of conduct; in
wh[illegible]osition to which, one powerful objection, and
ti[illegible]y one, occurred, namely, the personal hazard
n[illegible] ran, in undertaking so uncommon a measure
[illegible]thout positive instructions, at our own risk,
[illegible]ith the eyes of the whole nation on the affairs of
the Company, and the passions and prejudices of
almost every man in England inflamed against the
conduct of the Company, and the characters of
their servants. Notwithstanding which, we yielded
to the strong necessity impressed upon us by the
inducements abovementioned, in spite of the sug-
gestions and the checks of self-interest, which set
continually before our eyes the dread of forfeiting
the favour of our employers and becoming the
objects of popular invective, and made us involun-
tarily rejoice at every change in the Vizier's
advices, which protracted the execution of the
measure. At length, however, his resolution co-
inciding with our opinions, the enterprize was
undertaken; and if our intelligence be confirmed,

it

1774. souly, belonging to the son of Dudney Cawn, had
BENGAL. been acquired by the Vizier.

Dispatch to the Court of Directors, with reasons for the operations against the Rohillas.

The Council, in announcing these events to the Directors, stated, that "every circumstance that could possibly favour this enterprize, by an uncommon combination of political considerations and fortuitous events, operated in support of the measure.

"1st. Justice to the Vizier for the aggravated breach of treaty in the Rohilla chiefs.

"2d. The honour of the Company, pledged implicitly by General Barker's attestation for the accomplishment of this treaty, and which, added to their alliance with the Vizier, engaged us to see redress obtained for the perfidy of the Rohillas.

"3d. The completion of the line of defence of the Vizier's dominions, by extending his boundary to the natural barrier formed by the northern chain of hills and the Ganges and their junction.

"4th. The acquisition of forty lacs of rupees to the Company, and of so much specie added to the exhausted currency of these provinces.

"5th. The subsidy of two lacs ten thousand rupees per month, for defraying the charges of one-third of our army employed with the Vizier.

"6th. The urgent and recent orders of the Company for reducing charges, and procuring the means to discharge the heavy debt at interest, heightened by the advices of their great distresses at home.

"7th.

"7th. The absence of the Mahrattas from Hindostan, which left an open field for carrying the proposed plan into execution. 1774. BENGAL.

"8th, and lastly. The intestine divisions and dissensions in their state, which, by engaging them fully at home, would prevent interruptions from their incursions, and leave a moral certainty of success to the enterprise.

"These were the inducements which determined us to adopt this new plan of conduct; in opposition to which, one powerful objection, and only one, occurred, namely, the personal hazard we ran, in undertaking so uncommon a measure without positive instructions, at our own risk, with the eyes of the whole nation on the affairs of the Company, and the passions and prejudices of almost every man in England inflamed against the conduct of the Company, and the characters of their servants. Notwithstanding which, we yielded to the strong necessity impressed upon us by the inducements abovementioned, in spite of the suggestions and the checks of self-interest, which set continually before our eyes the dread of forfeiting the favour of our employers and becoming the objects of popular invective, and made us involuntarily rejoice at every change in the Vizier's advices, which protracted the execution of the measure. At length, however, his resolution coinciding with our opinions, the enterprize was undertaken; and if our intelligence be confirmed,

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it is now finally closed, with that success which we had foreseen from the beginning. We shall then again return to the state of peace from which we emerged, when we first engaged in the Rohilla expedition, with the actual possession or acknowledged right (which the power of this Government can amply and effectually assert) of near seventy lacs of rupees, acquired by the monthly subsidy and the stipulation: and it rests with you to pass the ultimate judgment on our conduct."*

Further operations against the Rohillas.

This letter had scarcely been despatched, when the troops were again called into the field, in consequence of intelligence that matters were accommodated between the Mahratta chieftains. The Vizier was, therefore, anxious to complete the total reduction of the Rohillas without delay, by which the designs of the King and the Mahrattas, to be executed after the rains, would be defeated. The King had taken into his service Sumroo, the notorious assassin of the unfortunate prisoners at Patna.†

The Vizier had been punctual in his payments of the monthly subsidy for the brigade, and had given an assignment on his treasury for the fifteen lacs due by the treaty of September, 1773,‡ for the second payment on account of the cession of Corah and Allahabad.

Colonel Champion, under all the circumstances, consented

* Letter to Court, 17th October, 1774.

† *Vide* page 89. ‡ *Vide* printed Treaties.

consented to advance. On the 10th of August, when within four short marches of Pattir Gur, he received information that the Rohillas were retiring, but had left a body of troops at that place, which was taken possession of by the Vizier on the 16th. This event completed his conquest of the Rohilla country, wherein the Company had engaged to assist him. Fizula Cawn, their remaining chief, with an army of 40,000 men, was cooped up in the mountains. They had suffered much from the want of provisions. The Vizier, desirous of finishing the war, made proposals to him, which were rejected. The position of Fizula Cawn was beyond the Rohilla country, the limits within which the operations of the Company's troops were to be confined. Colonel Champion had been repeatedly solicited by the Vizier to attack them; being subsequently authorized to exercise his own judgment as to the best measures to be pursued for bringing the war to a close, he consented to advance against them and thus terminated hostilities.

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Vizier proposes an interview with the King.

The Vizier proposed an interview with the King, for the avowed purpose of regulating the lately conquered countries. It was agreed, that the commanding officer of the Company's troops should be present, and assist with his counsel and advice. He was strictly prohibited from engaging the Company as guarantee to any of the treaties or agreements which might be entered into between his

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his Majesty and the Vizier, or from being a party to any other engagements whatever, likely to produce any new claims or demands upon the Company. If the influence of the brigade, employed for the security of the Vizier's country, should extend itself to the protection of any part which might be allotted to the King, Colonel Champion was instructed to demand the renunciation of his Majesty's claim to the Bengal tribute, and thereby prevent any future cause of misunderstanding between the King and the Company.

CHAPTER VIII.

1772-4. BENGAL. Revenue and judicial system.

THE collection of the REVENUES and the administration of JUSTICE were other important objects which claimed the attention of government.

Revenue system.

The approbation given by the Directors to the plan of farming lands on lease, has been already noticed, in connexion with the proceedings relative to Mahomed Reza Khan, and their determination to stand forth as Dewan, "by the agency of the Company's servants," and to assume the entire management of the revenues.*

The Council accordingly deliberated on the establishment of a plan for giving effect to the Court's views, for settling the several districts throughout the provinces upon the same footing, and for the future government of the collections.

Some conception of the difficulty of the task may be formed from a consideration of the various circumstances connected with the state of the revenue system at that period.

The effects of the famine with which the provinces had been visited, had been dwelt upon in laboured descriptions; every circumstance of fact, and every art of language, had been accumulated

* *Vide* page 355.

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lated to raise compassion and to excite indignation against the Company's servants. But its influence upon the revenues had remained unnoticed, and even unfelt, by those for whom it was collected; for, notwithstanding the loss of at least one-third of the inhabitants of the province, and the consequent decrease of the cultivation, the net collections of 1771 exceeded those of 1768, which preceded the year of dearth, and followed that of the famine in 1770. This circumstance was owing to the revenue having been violently kept up to its former standard. It was not easy to trace the various means by which this was effected; indeed, the task of following the progress of the collections through all its intricate channels, or even of comprehending all the elements which composed it in its first operations, was most difficult. There was one tax, however, which the Council described as accounting for the equality preserved in the past collections. It was called *Najaihy*, or an assessment upon the actual inhabitants of every inferior division of the lands, to make up for the loss sustained in the rents of their neighbours, who were either dead or had fled the country. This tax, equally impolitic and oppressive, had been authorized by the ancient and general usage of the country. It had not the sanction of government, but took place as a matter of course. In ordinary cases, and while the lands were in a state of cultivation, it was scarcely felt,

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felt, and never or rarely complained of. However irreconcileable with strict justice, it afforded a reparation to the state for occasional deficiences; it was a kind of security against desertion, by making the inhabitants mutually responsible for each other, and precluded the inferior collector from availing himself of the pretext of waste or deserted lands, to withhold any part of his collections. But the same practice which, under different circumstances, might have been beneficial, became under the affliction of famine, an intolerable burthen, and fell, with peculiar severity, upon the inhabitants of those villages which had suffered the greatest depopulation. It also afforded an opportunity to the farmers and others to levy, under colour of it, contributions on the people, and even to increase it to whatever magnitude they pleased, being themselves the judges of the loss sustained, and of the proportion which the inhabitants were to pay to replace it.

It has been observed, with reference to the then state of the Revenue System, "that seven years had elapsed since the Company became possessed of the Dewanny, yet no regular process had been formed for conducting it." Such was the undoubted fact; but it may be asked, whether the Court at home, or their representatives abroad, were in a situation to have framed and laid down any such scheme? The novelty of the business connected with the revenue, to those who were appointed

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appointed to superintend it—the chicanery of the people whom they were obliged to employ as their agents—the accidental exigencies of each district, and not unfrequently the just discernment of the collector, occasioned many changes; every change added to the confusion which involved the whole, and few were either authorized or known by the presiding members of the government. The articles which composed the revenue, the mode of keeping accounts, the computation of time, even the technical terms, which form the greatest part of the obscurity of every science, differed as much as the soil and productions of the province. This confusion was stated to have had its origin in the nature of the former government. The Nazims exacted what they could from the Zemindars and great farmers of the revenues, whom they left at liberty to plunder all below them, reserving to themselves the prerogative of plundering in their turn. The Mootsuddees,* who stood between the Nazim and the Zemindars, or between them and the people, had each their share of the public wealth. These profits, being considered illegal embezzlements, were consequently taken with every caution which could ensure secresy: and, being fixed by no rule, the amount was dependent on the temper, abilities, or power of each individual. It therefore became a duty in every man to

* Clerks or accountants.

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to take the most effectual measures to conceal the value of his property, and elude every inquiry into his conduct; while the zemindars and other landholders, who had the advantage of long possession, availed themselves of it by complex divisions of the lands, and intricate modes of collection, to perplex the officers of government, and confine the knowledge of the rents to themselves.

To the original defects inherent in the constitution of these provinces, was added the unequal and unsettled government of them. Part of the lands which were before in the possession of the Company, such as Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong, continued subject to the authority of three chiefs, who were immediately accountable to the Presidency. The Twenty-four Pergunnahs, acquired by the treaty of Plassey, were the Company's on a different tenure, being their immediate property, by the exclusion of the zemindars or hereditary proprietors. Their rents were received by agents appointed to each pergunnah, and remitted to the collector, who resided at Calcutta.

The rest of the province was for some time entrusted to the joint charge of the Naib Dewan and Resident of the Durbar, and afterwards to the Council of Revenue at Moorshedabad, and to the supervisors, who were accountable to that Council. The administration itself was totally

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excluded from all concern in this branch of the revenue.

The internal arrangement of each district varied no less than that of the whole province. Of the lands subject to the same collector, and intermixed with each other, some were held by farm, some superintended by sheikdars or agents on the part of the collector, and some left to the zemindars or talookdars themselves, under various degrees of control. The first were racked without mercy, because the leases were but of a year's standing, and the farmer had no interest or check to restrain him from exacting more than the land could bear. The second were equally drained, and the rents embezzled, as it was not possible for the collector, with the greatest degree of attention on his part, to prevent it. There was no reason to suppose that the latter escaped the general corruption.

A Committee of Circuit, consisting of the President and four other members of the Board, was accordingly appointed for the purpose of forming a settlement, under personal inspection, at the Sudder Cutcherry of each district. In consequence of the proximity of the districts of Hooghly, Hedgellee, the Calcutta pergunnahs, Burdwan, Midnapore, and Beerbhoom, their settlement was left to the determination of the remaining members of the Board. As the servants would henceforth be solely employed in superintending and collecting

collecting the revenues, the designation of collector was substituted for that of supervisor, which was abolished.* 1772-4. BENGAL.

In order to counteract the improper influence which the banyans of the collectors were desirous of assuming, and also to provide against the loss of rents and the confusion of accounts, from the frequent removal of collectors, a fixed dewan was to be nominated by the Board, and joined with the collector in superintending the revenues.

To give the farmer the greatest security for the rights and profits of his farm, and encouragement to those who were solicitous of obtaining farms to make proposals adequate to their real value, neither the collector nor dewan was to send sepoys, peons, or any other persons with authority, into the lands, but when indispensably requisite for the maintenance of the peace, or the immediate execution of justice, where the authority of the farmer should be insufficient. On such occasions, a warrant in writing was to be issued under the public seal, signed by the collector, and recorded in the judicial proceedings.

To free the ryot from undue exactions on the part of the farmer, the latter was not to receive larger

* The Court of Directors, in a letter of the 7th April 1773, written previously to their receipt of the plan laid down in these regulations, expressed their opinion that the institution of supervisors not having answered the intended purpose, must be withdrawn, and some plan framed for ascertaining the exact value of the lands.

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larger rents from the ryots than the amount stipulated in the pottahs, on any pretence whatsoever. On the conviction of any party guilty of such extortion, he was to pay back the sum so taken from the ryot, in addition to a penalty to be paid to the Circar equal to the same amount. In the event of a repetition of such exaction, the lease was to be annulled.

It having been a practice of ancient and almost universal standing, for further claims to be made by the mootsuddees and officers of Government on the farmer who had improved his land, whereby he was led to conceal the profits of his farm, or to rack his tenants for the means of purchasing exemption from such claims, the Board resolved, in order to relieve him from such exactions, that his payment to Government should be ascertained and established; the same to be expressed in the doul, or rent-roll, delivered with the lease, beyond which no demand was to be made. It was determined that no matouts, or other assessments, or tax, should be imposed upon the ryots, and that those imposts, which were of late establishment, should be carefully scrutinized and abolished, at the discretion of the Committee of Circuit, if found to be oppressive or pernicious.

This regulation was framed to give ease and security both to the farmer and the ryot; it having been the constant practice of the Mogul government, on the slightest pretence, to authorize the

the exaction of new taxes from the zemindars and farmers, all view of the remote consequences, which might arise out of such impolitic conduct, being lost sight of in the desire of immediate gain. The principals being thus taxed, had a fair pretext to indemnify themselves from their tenants; and they never failed to extort a much greater amount than they themselves had been obliged to pay. Every dependent agent in the collections, likewise, endeavoured on such occasions to get his share of the embezzlement; and thus the poor ryot was disheartened, and often disabled from attending to the culture of his lands, which required money as well as labour to bring them to perfection. 1772-4. BENGAL.

The trivial presents, which the custom of the East had established as debts of vassalage and the rights of office or power, were felt in themselves to be undeserving of notice, had they extended no further; but the same practice ran through every degree of subordination, till the amount became a mighty grievance, and, like other levies on the principals, was reclaimed with accumulated extortion from the ryots. It was therefore determined that all nuzzars* and salamies,† usually presented at the first interview as marks of subjection and respect, should be totally discontinued,

* A present to a superior.

† A present on receiving an appointment.

1772-4. BENGAL. discontinued, as well to the superior servants of the Company and the collectors, as to the zemindars, farmers, and other officers.

The collector was forbid, on pain of dismission from his office, to be concerned directly or indirectly in the purchase or sale of grain.

No peshcar, banyan, or other servant, of whatever denomination, of the collector, or relation or dependent of any such servant, was to be allowed to farm lands, or directly or indirectly to hold a concern in any farm, or to be security for any farmer.

In the event of collusion, the farms were to be relet, or made *khass*.* No European was permitted directly or indirectly to hold lands in any part of the country.

Had the collector, or any person who partook of his authority, been permitted to be farmers of the country, it was felt that no other persons would dare to be their competitors; neither was it fitting that the servants of the Company should be dealers with their masters. The collectors were, in fact, to be checks on the farmers, against whom the ryots were to look to the collector for relief.

The Committee of Circuit were enjoined to devise some means for preventing the practice of lending

* Lands, the rents of which are not leased, but collected immediately by the officers of Government.

lending money on exorbitant usury; it having been frequently found that the ryots had been thereby involved in irretrievable ruin, and that the farmer's dues, which were in fact the property of the state, had become that of money-lenders. 1772-4. BENGAL.

In order to relieve the farmer from the necessity of borrowing money for the payment of his kists or instalments, the kistbundee for the ensuing leases were to be so regulated that the kists might be made payable at the usual periods of the harvest, proportionate to the estimated quantity and value of the crops, and as local circumstances might direct. Such an arrangement was felt to be one of the most salutary expedients which could be adopted, whether for the ease of the farmer and the ryot, for the security of the revenue, or for the prevention of oppression. The rate of interest was stated to have been rarely less than three per cent. per mensem, which, with monthly accumulations, and fees to agents, banyans, peons, and sepoys, entailed certain ruin on the borrower.

In framing these regulations, the Council were governed by an anxious desire to adapt them to the manners and understanding of the people, and the exigencies of the country, adhering as closely as possible to the ancient usages and institutions.

To enable the committee to fix the necessary establishments in each district for its safeguard and protection, and for preserving its peace and tranquillity,

1772-4. BENGAL. tranquillity, accurate accounts of the *chakaran** lands were to be prepared, with a statement of the purposes for which they had been allotted, and of the number of land-servants necessary to be retained for that service.

The Board of Revenue at Moorshedabad was abolished, and the business of the collections in all its branches put under the management of the members of the administration at the Presidency.

After these preliminary steps had been determined upon, the lands of Kishnagur were put up to public auction, and a final settlement was made for five years, on an accumulating increase.

During the course of the sale, the Rajah of the place gave in proposals for farming the whole district; upon which the Council remarked, "when it can be done with propriety, the entrusting the collections of the districts to the hereditary zemindars would be a measure we should be very willing to adopt, as we believe that the people would be treated with more tenderness, the rents more improved, and the cultivation more likely to be encouraged; the zemindar less liable to failure or deficiencies than the farmer, from the perpetual interest which the former hath in the country, and because

* The *chakaran* lands were portions of ground allotted to certain of the inhabitants, whose office it was to preserve the peace of the country and to guard it against common robbers; it was an establishment common to all parts of India, and was of very ancient standing.

because his inheritance cannot be removed, and it would be improbable he would risk the loss of it, by eloping from his district, which is too frequently practised by a farmer when he is hard pressed for the payment of his balances, and as frequently pre-determined when he receives his farm." 1772-4. BENGAL.

THE administration of JUSTICE was intimately connected with the collection of the revenues. The Council observed, "that the regular course of justice was suspended every-where; but every man exercised it who had the power of compelling others to submit to his decisions." Judicial system.

The plan for administering justice comprised the establishment in each district of the two courts of judicature; the one by the name of Mofussil Dewanny Adawlut, or Provincial Court of Dewanny, for the cognizance of civil causes; the other by the name of Phousdarry Adawlut, or Court of Phousdarry, for the trials of all crimes and misdemeanors.

The collector of each district was to preside on the part of the Company, in their quality of King's Dewan, attended by the provincial Dewan, appointed by the President and Council.

In the Phousdarry Adawlut, the cauzee and muftee of the district, and two moolavies, were to sit to expound the law, the collector attending to the proceedings, so far as to see that all necessary evidence

1772-4. BENGAL.

evidence was summoned and examined, and that due weight was allowed to their testimony, and that the decision passed in a fair and impartial manner.

Two superior courts of justice were to be established at the chief seat of Government, the one under the denomination of Dewanny Sudder Adawlut, and the other the Nizamut Sudder Adawlut. They were to form courts of appeal from those of the provinces. The President, with two members of the Council, was to preside in the Dewanny Adawlut, attended by the dewan of the khalsa, the head canongoes, and other officers of the cutcherry; in the absence of the President, a third member of Council was to sit.

In the Nizamut Adawlut, a chief officer of justice was to preside by the title of Daroga Adawlut, assisted by the chief cauzee, the chief muftee, and three moolavies.

In forming the plan, the Committee confined themselves with scrupulous exactness to the constitutional forms of judicature already established, which were considered to be calculated for expediting the course of justice, and best adapted to the understanding of the people. It was observed that the general principle of all despotic governments is, that every degree of power shall be simple and undivided, and it necessarily introduced itself into the courts of justice; in proof of which a review of the different officers of justice instituted

instituted in the provinces was given by the Council.* 1772-4. BENGAL.

THE

* "15*th August*, 1772.—1. The NAZIM, as supreme magistrate, presides personally in the trials of capital offenders, and holds a court every Sunday, called the Roy Adawlut.

"2. The DEWAN is the supposed magistrate for the decision of such causes as relate to real estates or propriety in land, but seldom exercises this authority in person.

"3. The DAROGA ADAWLUT is properly the deputy of the Nazim. He is the judge of all matters of property, excepting claims of land and inheritance. He also takes cognizance of quarrels, frays, and abusive names.

"4. The DAROGA ADAWLUT DEWANNEE, or deputy of the Dewan, is the judge of property in lands.

"5. The PHOUJDAR is the officer of the place, the judge of all crimes not capital; the proofs of these last are taken before him and reported to the Nazim for his judgment and sentence upon them.

"6. The CAUZEE is the judge of all claims of inheritance or succession. He also performs the ceremonies of weddings, circumcision, and funerals.

"7. The MOHTESIL has cognizance of drunkenness and of the vending of spirituous liquors and intoxicating drugs, and the examination of false weights and measures.

"8. The MUFTEE is the expounder of the law. *Memorandum.*—The Cauzee is assisted by the Muftee and Mohtesil in his court; after hearing the parties and evidences, the Muftee writes the fetwa, or the law applicable to the case in question, and the Cauzee pronounces judgment accordingly. If either the Cauzee or Mohtesil disapprove of the fetwa, the cause is referred to the Nazim, who summons the ijlass, or general assembly, consisting of the Cauzee, Muftee, Mohtesil, the Darogas of the Adawlut, the Molavies, and all the learned in the law, to meet and decide upon it. Their decision is final.

"9. The CANOONGOES are the registers of the lands. They have no authority, but causes of land are often referred to them for

1772-4. BENGAL. Measures for suppressing decoits.

THE peace of the country had for some years been disturbed by bands of *decoits*, who not only infested the high roads, but often plundered whole villages, burning the houses and murdering the inhabitants. The secrecy of their haunts, and the wild state of the districts more immediately subject to their incursions, enabled them to elude every attempt to bring them to justice. It was therefore determined, that each criminal, on conviction, should be carried to the village to which he belonged and there executed, as a terror and example to others. The village was to be fined according to the enormity of the crime, and each inhabitant according to his substance. The family of the criminal were to become slaves of the state, to be disposed of for the general benefit and convenience of the people, according to the discretion of Government.

The Council were quite alive to the unfavourable impression which this sanction to slavery was calculated to make upon their countrymen in England, with reference to the practice in the American colonies; but, they observed, slaves in India

for decision by the Nazim or Dewan, or Daroga of the Dewannee.

"10. The CUTWALL is the peace-officer of the night, dependent on the Poujdarree.'

From this list it will appear that there are properly three courts for the decision of civil causes (the canongoes being only made arbitrators by reference from the other courts), and one for the police and criminal matters.

India are treated as the children of the families to which they belong, and often acquire a much happier state by their slavery than they could have hoped for by the enjoyment of their liberty; so that, in effect, the apparent rigour exercised on the children of convicted robbers, would be no more than a change of condition, by which they would be no sufferers, though it would operate as a warning to others, and afforded the only effectual means of dissipating the desperate and abandoned societies which subsisted on the distress of the general community.* 1772-4. BENGAL.

The excesses of the decoits increased to so great an extent, that the subject was brought specially under the consideration of the Council, in the month of April, when it was determined, at the recommendation of the President, to appoint foujdars† to the several stations, for the protection of the inhabitants, for the detection and apprehension of public robbers within their respective districts, and for transmitting constant intelligence of all matters relating to the peace of the country, to the Presidency. The zemindars, farmers, and other officers of the collections, were enjoined to afford them all possible assistance in the discharge of their duty, and to obey such orders as they might have occasion to issue for that purpose. The

* Proceedings, Committee Circuit, 1773.

† The FOUJDAR, a military officer who is charged with the care of the police in his district.

1772-4. BENGAL.

The farmers were to make over the land-servants allowed for their respective districts, who were to be under the absolute command of the foujdars. The chakaran* lands (allotted for the maintenance of the thanadars† and pykes‡), which had been resumed and included in the jumma, were to be again separated and applied to their original design; the jurisdiction of each foujdar was to be ascertained by proper limits, he being made responsible for the maintenance of peace within it.§

A zemindar arrested at the suit of an European.

The first instance of a zemindar being arrested, at the suit of an European, took place in the streets of Calcutta, on the person of Rajah Kissen Chund, of Nuddeah, who had been summoned to attend at the khalsa upon the affairs of his district. The Council feeling that great detriment would be occasioned to the revenues of the district by the confinement of the zemindar, and that it might be followed up by other cases, gave bail for Kissen Chund, and caused a proclamation to be issued, forbidding all the Company's servants, under penalty of dismission, from lending money to the zemindars under any pretence whatever: also requiring all persons having claims against them to recur to the ordinary courts of the country for justice.

* *Vide* note, page 424.

† THANADAR, the officer in charge of a thana, or police-station.

‡ PYKE, a watchman.

§ Revenue Consultations, 19th April 1774.

justice.* The matter was referred to the law-officers by the Court of Directors, who, under the advice of counsel, directed that the action should be discharged. The proceedings of the Government were fully approved, and the standing order confirmed, which prohibited Company's servants, on pain of dismissal, from lending money to the zemindars, or from having any dealings with them, and declaring that those who had claims must go to the courts of the country for redress. 1772-4. BENGAL.

THE establishments which had been formed for the police of the town of Calcutta having been found insufficient to remedy all disorders incident to so populous a city, and the Foujdarry Adawlut being greatly impeded in the proper exercise of its functions, from the continued appeals made by European inhabitants in complaints against their servants, by which crimes of the "most atrocious natures," often remained for months unexamined, and the jails crowded with prisoners, the Council determined upon sundry regulations, calculated to ease the Foujdarry Adawlut in the cognizance of complaints of masters against their servants for venial offences, and to introduce better order in the police of the settlement, by vesting a degree of authority in such matters in the superintendence of the police of the settlement. The subject was submitted 1774. Police of Calcutta.

* Letter from Bengal, 10th November 1773.

1774. BENGAL. submitted to the consideration of the inhabitants, who, selecting from their body a committee of twelve, agreed to every measure that could tend to give them efficacy.* Among the regulations one demands to be specially noticed, as it was to abolish in future the right of slavery.†

THE

* Consultations, May 17th 1774, and Letter 18th October 1774.

† 11*th May* 1774.—"That from the 1st day of July 1774, no person shall be allowed to buy or sell a slave who is not such already by former legal purchase, and any cauzee who shall grant any cawbawla after that date for the sale of any slave whatever, shall be dismissed from his employment, and such cawbawla shall be invalid."

The practice of stealing children from their parents and selling them for slaves, had long prevailed in the country, and had greatly increased since the establishment of the English government. The influence derived from the English name, to every man whose birth, language, or even habit, entitled him to assume a share in its privileges; the neglect of the judicious precautions established by the ancient law of the country, which required that no slave shall be sold without a cawbawla, or deed attested by the cauzee, signifying the place of the child's abode, and in the first purchase, its parent's names, the names of the seller and purchaser, and a minute description of the persons of both, had greatly facilitated this savage commerce, by which numbers of children were conveyed out of the country in Dutch, but more especially French vessels, and many lives of infants destroyed by the attempts to secrete them from the notice of the magistrate. There appeared to be no probable way of remedying this calamitous evil, but that of striking at the root of it, and abolishing the right of slavery altogether, excepting such cases to which the authority of government could not reach; such, for example, as laws in being have allowed, and where slaves have become a first property by purchase, and antecedent to

1774. BENGAL. Revenue system revised.

THE instructions from the Court of Directors in April 1773,* combined with the little success which had attended the revenue settlement, arising in a great measure from the bidders having been induced by eagerness of competition to make higher offers than the country could bear, in consequence of which many of them failed in the performance of their engagements to a considerable amount, led to a change of system in the early part of 1774.

The European collectors were recalled, but the districts that formed the existing collectorships were to remain. Each district was to be superintended by a dewan or aumil, excepting such as had been let entire to the zemindar or farmer.

The administration of civil justice, which had been entrusted to the collector, was transferred to the aumil, from whom an appeal lay to the Provincial Council, and from thence, under certain restrictions, to the Sudder Dewanny, or the Governor in Council.

A Committee of Revenue was formed at the Presidency, consisting of two members of the board and three senior servants, who were to superintend

to the proposed prohibition. The opinions of the most creditable of the Musselmen and Hindoo inhabitants were taken upon the subject: they condemned the authorized usage of selling slaves, as repugnant to the particular precepts both of the Koran and Shastras, oppressive to the people, and injurious to the general welfare of the country.

* *Vide* page 419.

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superintend and control the whole of the revenue branch, subject to the superior Council. Occasional commissioners were to be appointed to visit such districts as might require a local investigation. They were to be taken from the Company's servants, not by seniority, but by the free choice of the board, and were to be qualified for the trust by a knowledge of the Persian or Hindoostanee, and a moderation of temper. All complaints of the ryots or others against the dewans, farmers, zemindars, or other public officers, were to be received and decided upon by the committee.

To carry the plan into effect, the provinces were formed into six grand divisions, the first to be managed at Calcutta, the second at Burdwan, the third at Moorshedabad, the fourth at Dinagepore, the fifth at Dacca, the sixth at Patna, comprising the whole province of Bahar. The districts of Chittagong and Tipperah were to be maintained on their existing footing.

Provincial councils were established for each grand division, composed of a chief and four other senior servants, with a secretary, a Persian translator, an accountant, and three assistants.

It was an article in the instructions to each of the Councils, that they should make particular enquiry concerning every talook, or other smaller portions of land, included within each district of their division, but appertaining to some other district, whether of their own or any other division.

sion. They were to ascertain the aumil's malguzary and profit of the same. All particulars were to be furnished to the superior council, so as to enable them to form a more complete and entire arrangement, for the better government and management of the collections. Whenever the accounts and arrangements of any division permitted it, the controul of such division was to be brought down to the Presidency. The Provincial Council was to be carried on at Calcutta, and, if possible, by the Committee of Revenue. 1774. BENGAL.

Mr. Halhead, of the civil service, undertook, at the instance of the President, to make an English translation of the Mahomedan and Hindoo code of laws, it being considered that great utility would be experienced from such a work, not only to the members and superior judges of the Adawlut, but to the public at large. The work was completed in March 1775, and dedicated by its author to Mr. Hastings, to whom he ascribed both the result of the execution, and the entire merit of the original plan.

THE province of Cooch Bahar, which forms the boundary of a large portion of the Rungpore district, devolved to the Company, with the rest of Bengal, 1765. In 1772, the Cooch Rajah, then a minor, offered, through his minister, Nazu Deo, to place his province under the dominion of the Bengal government, and to pay to them half its Cooch Bahar.

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revenues, on condition of the Company's aiding in expelling the Boutanneans, who, headed by their chief, the Deb Rajah, had suddenly invaded his country.

The Company's district of Rungpore having been frequently exposed to the incursions of the Boutanneans, by which the revenues drawn from it had been rendered very precarious, the Council resolved to detach a force to effect the intended object. The result being successful, the Boutan Rajah applied to the Teshoo Lama to mediate between him and the Company.

The Lama accordingly addressed the following letter to Mr. Hastings:

"The Taishooa Lama at Boutan to the Governor:—(Received 29th March 1774.)

"The affairs of this quarter in every respect flourish, and I am night and day employed for the increase of your happiness and prosperity. Having been informed by travellers from your quarter of your exalted fame and reputation, my heart, like the blossom of spring, abounds with gaiety, gladness, and joy. Praise! that the star of your fortune is in its ascension—Praise! that happiness and ease are the surrounding attendants of myself and family. Neither to molest or persecute is my aim: it is even the characteristic of my sect to deprive ourselves of the necessary refreshments of sleep, should an injury be done to a single individual. But in justice and humanity I am informed you surpass us. May you ever adorn the seat of justice and power, that mankind may, under the shadow of your bosom, enjoy the blessings of happiness and ease! By your favour I am the Raja and Lama of this country, and rule over numbers of subjects,

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subjects, a particular with which you have no doubt been acquainted by travellers from these parts. I have been repeatedly informed that you have been engaged in hostilities against the Dah Terrea, to which, it is said, the Dah's own criminal conduct in committing ravages and other outrages on your frontiers, has given rise. As he is of a rude and ignorant race, past times are not destitute of instances of the like misconduct which his own avarice tempted him to commit: it is not unlikely that he has now resumed those instances, and the ravages and plunder which he may have committed on the skirts of the Bengal and Bahar provinces have given you provocation to send your vindictive army against him; however, his party has been defeated; many of his people have been killed, three forts have been wrested from him, and he has met with the punishment he deserved, and it is as evident as the sun, your army has been victorious; and that if you had been desirous of it, you might in the space of two days have entirely extirpated him, for he had not power to resist your efforts. But I now take upon me to be his mediator, and to represent to you, that as the said Dah Terrea is dependent upon the Dalee Lama who rules this country with unlimited sway (but on account of his being in his minority, the charge of the government and administration for the present is committed to me), should you persist in offering further molestation to the Dah's country, it will irritate both the Lama and all his subjects against you. Therefore, from a regard to our religion and customs, I request you will cease all hostilities against him, and in doing this you will confer the greatest favour and friendship upon me. I have reprimanded the Dah for his past conduct, and I have admonished him to desist from his evil practices in future, and to be submissive to you in all matters. I am persuaded that he will conform to the advice which I have given him, and it will be necessary

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sary that you treat him with compassion. As to my part, I am but a faqueer, and it is the custom of my sect, with the rosary in our hands, to pray for the welfare of mankind and the peace and happiness of the inhabitants of this country; and I do now, with my head uncovered, entreat that you cease all hostilities against the Dah in future. It would be needless to add to the length of this letter, as the bearer of it, who is a Goseign, will represent to you all particulars, and it is hoped that you will comply therewith. In this country, worship of the Almighty is the profession of all. We poor creatures are in nothing equal to you. Having a few things in hand I send them to you by way of remembrance, and I hope for your acceptance of them."

A treaty, consisting of ten articles, was agreed to on the 25th April, by which certain lands were restored to the Deb Rajah, who was to pay to the Company for the possession of the Chitta Cotta province a tribute of five Tauzan horses: the Boutan merchants being allowed the privilege of sending a caravan annually to Rungpore.

Mr. Hastings being of opinion that the communication from the Teshoo Lama opened a fit opportunity for effecting an intercourse between Thibet and Bengal, proposed that Mr. Bogle, of whose merits and services the Council entertained a high opinion, should be deputed to the Lama, with a letter and suitable presents, accompanied by a sample of goods, with the view of ascertaining what were most likely to become the objects of commerce.

The Council fully concurring in the views of the

the president, Mr. Bogle proceeded on the mission in June, together with Mr. Hamilton, an assistant-surgeon. 1774. BENGAL.

The province of Bengal had suffered very severely from a lawless banditti, consisting of synassies or faquirs. Under pretence of religious pilgrimage, they had been accustomed to traverse the chief part of the province, begging, stealing, and plundering wherever they went. Having defeated and cut off a party of the sepoys sent against them, with their commander, Captain Thomas, who had been solely engaged in making the collections, a separate corps was formed purposely for the frontiers, in the hope of entirely suppressing these marauders, a provision being inserted in the treaty by which they were considered as enemies to the English. The Deb Rajah engaged not to allow any of them to take shelter in his district.

CHAPTER IX.

THE Parliamentary inquiry, which commenced in 1772, terminated in the act of the 13 Geo. III, cap. 16, commonly called the regulating act, it being the first legislative measure which prescribed any defined system for the conduct of the Company's affairs.

The twenty-four Directors had hitherto been chosen annually. Some of the abuses had been partially checked, by a Proprietor being required before voting, to declare upon oath, that he had possessed his qualification of £500 stock for six months, yet the evils resulting from the limited duration of a Director's office to one year were strongly felt. The practice tended to weaken the authority of the Court, and to produce instability in the Councils of the Company. It was accordingly provided, that a Director should retain office for four years, at the expiration of which term he was to retire from the direction for a year, when he was eligible for re-election. This restriction appears to have originated in a by-law, passed in the year 1734, which ordained that no member should retain his seat for a longer term than four years successively. No party who had held

held office in India was eligible to be chosen a Director until he had resided two years in England. The qualification was enlarged from £500 to £1,000 stock, and the period for which the party intending to vote must have held his qualification before voting was extended from six to twelve months. The privilege of voting being increased in proportion to the stock held by any one party.*

A new oath was prescribed by the act, to be taken by the Directors. It was framed with reference to the combined affairs of the Company, and especially to their varied commercial operations. The same oath is continued at the present time, but appears to be wholly inapplicable to the altered duties of a Director.

With regard to India, a Governor-general and four Councillors were appointed for Bengal, each individual to continue in office for the term of five years. The presidencies of Madras and Bombay were henceforth required to obey the orders of the supreme Government in Bengal. The Directors were to forward to one of his Majesty's Secretaries

* £1,000 Stock gives 1 Vote
3,000 do. ... 2 Votes
6,000 do. ... 3 —
10,000 do ... 4 —

Which latter number is the maximum allowed to be given by any one Proprietor. £500 stock enables its possessor to take part in debates in General Court, but not to vote, either by shew of hands, or on a division, or ballot. 13 Geo. III. cap. 63.

cretaries of State and to the Lords of the Treasury, copies of all advices, within fourteen days after their receipt by the Court, which related to the civil and military affairs and government of India. From this period, therefore, his Majesty's Ministers were empowered to become fully informed upon all the political concerns of the Company in India, but possessed no power to interfere with or to control the measures of the executive body at home, or the orders and instructions which they might see fit to issue for the conduct of their servants abroad.

1773. BENGAL. Regulating Act.

Warren Hastings, Esq. was nominated, in the Act, Governor-general, and Lieutenant-general Clavering, the Honourable George Monson, Richard Barwell, and Philip Francis, Esqrs. Councillors.

On a vacancy occurring in the office of Governor-general, the Councillor next in rank was to succeed, and in the event of a vacancy in the Council, the Directors might appoint a successor for the remainder of the five years, subject to his Majesty's approbation. From and after the expiration of five years the power of nominating and removing the succeeding Governor-general and Council was vested in the Directors. The provisions relating to the Governor-general and Council were to commence from the time that public proclamation should be made of their arrival in Bengal.

His

1773. BENGAL. Regulating Act.

His Majesty was authorized to establish a Supreme Court of Judicature at Calcutta, to consist of a chief justice and three puisne judges. The jurisdiction of the Court was to extend to all British subjects in Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa: and appeals might be made to it from the Provincial Courts.

The commerce was specially reserved to the Company. No British subject was to trade in salt, betel-nut, or tobacco. No person was to take more than twelve per cent. interest per annum on loan of money. All offences and misdemeanors tried in the Supreme Court were to be decided by a jury of British subjects. In cases of indictment or information laid in the Court of King's Bench in England, writs of mandamus might be issued, requiring the judges abroad and other persons to examine witnesses, &c.

Rules, ordinances, and regulations, when made by the Governor-general in Council, were to be sent home.

Another Act was passed at the same time, granting to the Company, on loan, £1,400,000 for their relief.*

The public were to forego, for a time, all participation in the territorial profits. The dividend to the proprietors was fixed at six per cent. per annum. The Company were not to accept bills drawn on them beyond a certain amount, and were

* 13 Geo. III. cap. 94.

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were to continue to export annually £380,837 of British merchandize.

Company petition against it.

The Company petitioned both Houses of Parliament against the provisions of the new Act; objecting especially to the clauses by which the Crown or Parliament appointed officers to conduct the whole of the civil and military affairs, whilst the directing power over them, without penalty for disobedience of orders, was pretended to be left in the Company. They represented that the object of the intended court of judicature would be defeated, as the persons who might be guilty of acts of oppression were exempted from the jurisdiction of the court, and consequently left without restraint; and the remedy of the writ of *habeas corpus*, whereby men might know of what crime they were accused, being wholly omitted, it legalized the tyranny of a double government, without responsibility any-where. All opposition to the bill, however, proved ineffectual.

The Proprietors, when the Act was laid before them in July, resolved that no orders or instructions should be sent out by the Directors until they had been submitted to and approved by a General Court specially summoned for the purpose. To maintain their privileges, and not out of disrespect to General Clavering, they further resolved "that they did not choose to appoint him their commander-in-chief in India."

Proprietors decline to appoint General Clavering their Commander-in-chief.

The

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The instructions proposed by the Directors to be sent to Bengal, for carrying into effect the provisions of the Act, were laid before the Proprietors on the 7th December. The consideration was postponed, and a committee consisting of seven Proprietors, the Duke of Richmond being chairman, was appointed to prepare counter-instructions. They were printed with those proposed by the Directors, and taken into consideration on the 11th January 1774. On the 25th of that month, the Directors' propositions were approved by the ballot, the votes in their favour being 406 to 308. On the 8th February, it was resolved by the ballot, 354 to 311, that it be recommended to the Directors to nominate General Clavering commander-in-chief of the Company's forces in India, with an express provision, that, in the event of his succeeding as Governor-general, his appointment as commander-in-chief was immediately to cease and determine.

Court of Directors propose instructions.

Committee of Proprietors appointed to prepare instructions.

General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, together with Sir Elijah Impey, the new chief justice, Robert Chambers, Stephen Le Maistre, and John Hyde, Esquires, puisne judges, embarked at St. Helen's for their destination, on the 1st April 1774. General Clavering wrote to the Court of Directors from Madeira, on the 24th, urging the importance of an adjutant-general being nominated, for the better government

New Government, under Regulating Act.

Councillors and Judges leave England.

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government of the Company's army, and recommending Lieutenant-colonel Thornton, of the King's service, for the office. He at the same time stated the inadequacy of his allowances as commander-in-chief to meet travelling and other expenses for equipage, horses, table, &c. when he took the field.

They reached Madras on the 21st September, where the General inspected the military establishment, respecting which he offered various remarks, observing: "I speak unwillingly of defects where there is so much to commend." He considered the fortifications to have been planned "with great judgment, and executed with equal care and attention." On the 22d, he accompanied the Governor, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, on a visit to the Nabob of the Carnatic.

The members of Council and the judges reached Kedgeree on Friday, the 14th October. The former announced their arrival to the President, who deputed the senior member to congratulate them on the happy termination of their voyage, and to assure them of the cordiality and respect with which they would be received by the Board. On the afternoon of Wednesday, they landed at Calcutta, under a salute of seventeen guns.

Arrive at Calcutta.

First meeting of Council.

The first Council was held the following day, although Mr. Barwell had not arrived at Calcutta from

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from the provinces. A proclamation was agreed upon, to be published the ensuing morning by the sheriff, announcing that the new government, as constituted under the Act, commenced from the 20th October. The Governor was requested by the new members to order a guard from the fort to attend upon the sheriff during the ceremony.

Proclamation of New Government.

The publication having taken place, the Court's instructions, with their general letter of the 30th March 1774, were read to the Council: they were addressed to Mr. Hastings, as Governor-general, and to the Councillors named in the Act.

Instructions under New Act.

Harmony was earnestly recommended. Attention was directed to the preservation of peace throughout India, and to the security of the Company's possessions. The Council was to assemble twice in every week. The correspondence with the country powers was to be carried on by the Governor-general only, but all letters proposed to be sent by him were to be first approved in Council, and all letters received by him were to be laid before the Council at their next meeting.

It being unlawful, under the Act, for the other Presidencies to declare war or make peace with any Indian power without the consent of the Supreme Government, the Council were attentively to view the general posture of the Company's affairs respecting the country powers, their interests, and probable connexions with each other,

with

1774. BENGAL. with the Company, and with other European nations, the safety and prosperity of Bengal being the principal object.

A Board of Trade was nominated, to conduct the commercial affairs of the Company. No parties employed under the Governor-general in Council in the management of the revenues were to be employed by the Board.

The military expenses having increased "to a degree insupportable," strict inquiry was to be made into the causes of such increase, and the charge of erecting, repairing, or completing fortifications, barracks, and all public buildings, in Bengal and its dependencies, was limited in future to £100,000 per annum. The reduction of the bond debt, in Bengal, was pressed upon the attention of the Council. The system of letting the lands and farms of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, on lease, was approved, and, in the event of any lands falling in, the Council were to advertise for proposals to relet them. Inquiry was to be made into past oppressions, and regulations were to be framed for preventing future abuses. On the establishment of the Supreme Court, all aid was to be given to the judges, and a court-house, with proper officers, to be provided.

Disputes having frequently occurred, on account of the powers claimed by the Governor and the military commander-in-chief, under their commissions, which caused injury to the public service,

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a commission was issued to the Governor-general, constituting him Governor and Commander-in-chief of the fortress and garrison of Fort William and town of Calcutta. 1774. BENGAL.

Lieutenant-general Clavering was granted a commission as Commander-in-chief of all the Company's forces in India.

If the Governor-general and Council should at any time think proper to issue orders, under their hands, or by their secretary, to any officer in the army, thereby suspending or superseding the specific commands of the Governor-general or military Commander-in-chief, such orders were to be implicitly obeyed.

The military Commander-in-chief was not to leave Bengal without the sanction of the Governor-general and Council.

Whenever the Commander-in-chief in India was at either of the other Presidencies, he was to have a seat as second in council; but to vote only on political and military affairs.

His allowances, as Commander-in-chief, were fixed at £6,000 per annum, and his salary, as a Member of Council, at £10,000 per annum. Copies of the commission to Mr. Hastings and to Lieutenant-general Clavering, and of the Court's instructions, were to be forthwith published in general orders at Fort William.

In addition to the foregoing instructions, a general letter was addressed to the Governor-general

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and Council. The measures of the President regarding Cooch Bahar were approved, although the Court by no means departed from the rule laid down, of confining their views to the possessions thus acquired. Whenever General Clavering could be spared from his duties in Bengal, he was to proceed to Madras and Bombay, to review the troops, and to make a strict examination into the state of the Company's armies at each Presidency, and to assist the Presidents and Councils in forming such regulations as might be necessary for rendering the forces respectable.

A revision of the coinage was to be made in Bengal, a treatise thereon, by Sir James Stuart, Bart., being forwarded for the information of the Council.*

At the instance of Mr. Hastings, the Council adjourned from Thursday, the 20th October, until the Monday following; on which day, Mr. Barwell having arrived at the presidency, the oaths of office were administered, and the commissions to the Governor-general and the Commander-in-chief promulgated.

Full Council meet, and oaths administered.

Minute by Mr. Hastings, on the state of public affairs.

In order to place the leading branches of the public affairs before the Council, a minute was delivered

* This gentlemen composed, for the use of the East-India Company, in 1772, a work entitled, "The Principles of Money applied to the present State of Bengal." It was printed, and the Court presented him with a ring, of one hundred guineas value, with a suitable inscription, in testimony of their sense of this service.

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delivered in by Mr. Hastings, reviewing the revenue system and the political state of the provinces. It was brought under consideration in the Secret Department. Mr. Hastings informed the Council that, in submitting his views, he by no means intended to preclude any member from offering such points for immediate deliberation as might be judged to claim a preference, and proffered his assistance upon any matter in which his communications might be considered useful. He stated that his desire had been to promote the Company's interests, and that he had full confidence in the dispositions of his colleagues to cooperate and unite in promoting the general welfare of the country.

He proposed to retain the revenue system as recently framed.

The Company's political connexion with the Vizier was pointed out, and they were informed that the original design of the Rohilla enterprise furnished the first occasion of the Governor-general meeting with his Highness. The advantages anticipated from that measure were an addition of territory and wealth to the Vizier, in which the Company would participate—the complete defence of his Highness' dominions—the employment of a third part of the Company's troops free of charge, and the forced retreat of the Mahrattas within their ancient territories. The Mogul, or King, was a mere cypher, residing at Delhi;

1774. BENGAL. the Company's connexion with him had ceased, and it was the Governor-general's wish that it might never be renewed. The Bengal tribute had been withheld from his Majesty since his desertion of the Company and his union with their enemies, the Mahrattas, amongst whom dissensions had existed for the preceding twelve months.

Council allow full operation to Revenue system.

The Council resolved to allow a full operation to the revenue system, as proposed in the minute of Mr. Hastings.

Differ on policy of Rohilla war.

On discussing the treaty of Benares, and the policy of the Rohilla expedition, General Clavering called for the production of the Governor-general's original correspondence with the resident at the court of the Vizier. Mr. Hastings, although fully prepared to lay before the Board all his correspondence which related to public affairs, declined to communicate such parts as might not be proper for public inspection. The majority of the Council, nevertheless, resolved that all ought to be produced. Mr. Hastings recorded his reasons for adhering to his original determination to refuse it; stating, that it contained unreserved and confidential communications given to the Resident, as his immediately recognized agent, appointed on his own responsibility, with the sanction of the late Board, and in strict conformity with the practice which had prevailed from 1757 to the dissolution of the late Government.

Call for Mr. Hastings' private correspondence.

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Government. He declared that, if those engagements were legal, no power on earth could authorize him to violate them, still less was he prepared to submit to an *ex post facto* law, of so sudden a formation.

Majority recall Mr. Middleton.

This determination led the majority of the Council, at the same meeting, to recall Mr. Middleton, the Governor-general's agent with the Vizier, and to require him to bring down the whole of his correspondence, as essential to a right judgment on the course of policy observed towards the Vizier, as well as of the Company's existing engagements with his Excellency. They also supported this requisition for the correspondence by appealing to the principles of policy which they knew had been established by "the highest authority," meaning Parliament; and they further resolved, that Colonel Champion, or the commanding officer, should be appointed to negociate with the Vizier, in the room of Mr. Middleton. Whilst thus removing the Governor-general's own agent, without one single proof, or even suspicion of misconduct, they professed to compliment Mr. Hastings, by proposing that he should nominate a substitute;* but, at the same moment, they required that he should apprize the Vizier of the recall of Mr. Middleton, and of the appointment of the commanding officer to

Appoint Col. Champion.

* Consultations, 26th October 1774.

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to negociate with his Highness. Two days only had elapsed between the first meeting of the new Council and the adoption of these decided proceedings towards the Governor-general, and before even the original official correspondence with Colonel Champion and Mr. Middleton had been communicated to the Council. That correspondence was not completed until the following Friday, when General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis recorded their protest against the determination of Mr. Hastings to withhold the confidential communications that had passed between himself and the Resident.

Proposed instructions to Col. Champion.

A series of propositions was at the same time submitted by the General, as the basis of instructions to Colonel Champion, who commanded the troops with the Vizier. He was to repeat the demand on the Vizier for the forty lacs, to require payments of such sums as might be due, and to call upon his Excellency to liquidate all unsettled accounts. If the whole of the forty lacs could not be obtained, not less than twenty lacs was to be taken, and the rest to be paid within twelve months. He was to protest against any refusal, on the part of the Vizier, to these terms, and to withdraw the brigade within fourteen days from the receipt of the instructions. Whenever the Vizier should have paid the money, the troops were to be withdrawn within the province of Oude, and unless his Highness required them for defence

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defence of Corah and Allahabad, they were to be cantoned at Dinapore.

These propositions remained for the consideration of the members until the next Council, which was to be held on Monday, the 31st October. On that day, a letter was received from Colonel Champion, announcing that terms of peace had been agreed upon between the Vizier and Fizula Cawn, the Rohilla chief.

Notwithstanding this intelligence, the majority persevered in sending instructions to Colonel Champion, framed in accordance with the preceding propositions, which, after further discussion, had been finally adopted. Mr. Hastings and Mr. Barwell protested, in the strongest manner, against the abrupt removal of the brigade, which, as the first act of the new Government, would be received as a declaration that the engagements with the Vizier were no longer existing. They suggested that, at all events, an extension of time might be given the Vizier, and that the Council should await the result of an application to him before coming to a final determination. They urged that the measure was one of the past administration, and on the point of being concluded; that, under such circumstances, they considered the members of the new Government might have been satisfied with recording their disapproval of the enterprize, and after the completion of the service, by withholding

Mr. Hastings and Mr. Barwell protest against instructions.

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ing their consent to the employment of the troops beyond the bounds which they judged to be prescribed by the orders of the Court. That, instead of removing Mr. Middleton, his appointment might have been confirmed, transferring the transactions with him from the superintendence of the Governor-general *only*, to the Council at large. Expostulation was vain. The letter to Colonel Champion was despatched the very day on which one was received from him, acquainting the Council that the army had countermarched; —that he purposed to station the brigade at Ramgaut, and that he should himself forthwith proceed to the Presidency, leaving the command in the hands of Colonel Galliez. It was on this occasion that Mr. Francis recorded a minute, containing the following passage: "The conditions which the late Government had unfortunately suffered the Vizier to prescribe to them, considered merely as the terms of a contract (for I do not mean to insist upon the danger and dishonour of submitting to such conditions), are so loose and unguarded, that they will always furnish him with a pretence for deferring payment of the forty lacs. For my own part, I do not scruple to declare, that if this extravagant engagement had been ratified in all the forms by which public treaties are usually authenticated, but none of which have been observed upon the present occasion, I should reject it with disdain."

Minute of Mr. Francis.

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The spirit thus evinced at the opening of the new Government, indicated too clearly that the majority of the Council partook of the prejudice that had been raised in England against both the Court of Directors and their governments in India. 1774. BENGAL.

The Council felt it to be their duty to make a report of their proceedings under the new system to the Home authorities. Strangers to the spirit of harmony which the Court had enjoined, they found it impossible to agree upon any general despatch. It was accordingly resolved that each party should address the Court separately; that the joint letter should be simply one of advice, comprehending resolutions and facts, and referring to the consultations for the reasonings on both sides.

General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis wrote to the Court on the 30th November. After enumerating the various points connected with the Rohilla war, and reiterating the objections which they entertained to the course of policy pursued by Mr. Hastings, they entered into a statement of some matters of a personal, yet frivolous nature, which indicated that they had laboured under a jaundiced feeling from the first moment of their landing at Calcutta. They complained that proper honours had not been paid to them on that occasion; that a sufficient salute had not been fired; that the troops were not drawn out; that they

1774. BENGAL. they were received at Mr. Hastings' private house instead of in the Council Chamber; that there was an unnecessary delay in issuing the new commissions; that the proclamation of the new Government was not made with sufficient parade; that it was at the desire of the Governor-general that the Council adjourned until the Monday, and that, during this interval, they were left "in the most anxious, not to say disgraceful situation." That public report soon informed them of the nature of the enterprizes in which the Company's troops were engaged, and that their alarm and anxiety at the intelligence they had acquired could only be equalled by that which they were persuaded the Court must have felt on first receiving it. They then drew a picture of the state in which they found the country on their arrival.

"We saw your provinces stripped of one-third of their defence; the lines most repeatedly and peremptorily drawn by you for the conduct of your servants towards the princes of Hindostan manifestly transgressed; in short, the whole system of your wise and pacific policy completely overturned; the *summa rerum* of all things being at stake."

In another letter, dated the same day, they stated that they had refused all nuzzars and presents. They noticed the Governor-general's reasons for accepting and paying nuzzars into the Company's

Company's treasury, and added, "Mr. Barwell has also given his reasons for accepting *and not* paying them over to the Company." They then dwelt upon the example of moderation and economy which they themselves had set to the service, declaring "that they had no conception of the degree in which such an example was wanted." They further stated that, in acceding to the appointment of Captain Brooke to an independent command under the Vizier, they yielded their own strict judgment to considerations of personal respect to Mr. Hastings;" adding, "that, to have recalled that officer, could not fail to have been attended with *personal pain* to the Governor-general." 1774. BENGAL.

It was expecting too much of the Governor-general that he should attach any weight to this profession, the same parties having, without any knowledge of the facts, and with no one fault to allege against Mr. Middleton, after taking their seats in Council but a few hours, resolved to recall him in the most abrupt manner from his station, as the confidential agent of the Governor-general at the Court of the same prince. Mr. Hastings entered into a general defence of his conduct. He pointed out the reductions he had effected in the bond debt since the close of 1773, and the increased amount of investment sent home; he adverted to the military operations under Government, and urged that every expedition had been connected

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Mr. Hastings defends his measures.

concerted for services of solid utility, and calculated for precise terminations: he stated that the campaign of 1773 had the recovery of Corah for its immediate object, and the application of its means to the relief of the Company's wants. The last campaign, he observed, had terminated with the most complete success. The district of Ramghur had been brought into subjection, and the revenues increased. The Jungle Territory, a tract of country unknown, and considered inaccessible, serving as a receptacle for robbers, had been reduced, and their further ravages prevented. The Cooch Bahar expedition had produced all the contemplated effects, in the settlement of that country, and the dispersion of the Tynassies. Painful as he felt his situation, and unsuitable as it was to his disposition, it was his determined resolution to retain the place which the Court's favour originally assigned to him, and which the Legislature had so honourably confirmed.

He inferred that Parliament had intended some peculiar power should attach to the office of Governor-general, above the other members; but he felt that a majority had been formed against him, not by an accidental occurrence, but by a decided and permanent combination, which called for some remedy. He nevertheless declared that he would not quit the ground on which he stood; he appealed to a large portion of his life passed in the Company's service, and rested his cause solely on the

the measures which had drawn him into his present vindication. Measures adopted solely for the Company's benefit and the national honour, and he knew that they had been productive of both to the utmost reach of his wishes. Should the Court judge him fit to be continued in his station, he expressed his readiness to devote the best years of his life to the Company's service. If, on the other hand, either the Court, or a higher authority, should decree his yielding his post to another, he should submit without a murmur, conscious of his own integrity, but retaining the sense of gratitude which he felt for the obligation already conferred upon him. 1774. BENGAL.

He then referred to the several orders of the Court, as to political and military operations in India. He considered the principle primarily insisted upon by the home authorities, was to avoid the extension of territory. He construed their orders of June 1769, as confining their views to the security of the Company's possessions, and those of their allies, but, nevertheless, as contemplating the possible necessity for carrying the Company's arms in certain cases beyond those bounds, and of becoming parties in war. The Mahrattas might have been permitted to take possession of Corah and Allahabad, to have allied themselves with the Rohillas, or to have established themselves in Rohilcund, and to have lain with their armies unmolested on the borders of the open country

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country of the Company's ally, till they had completed every preparation for invading the territory of the Vizier, and that such a forbearance might have been vindicated by an appeal to the letter of the Court's instructions; but he felt that it was not by such cold and prudential caution, that the British empire in Bengal had been acquired or could be maintained. Nor did he feel that it would, in point of fact have been in conformity with the spirit and intent of such instructions. With regard to the non-production of his private and confidential correspondence, he stated that it had been carried on in the same mode as had been observed by his predecessors, and that he considered it would have been a dishonourable breach of confidence to have placed it on the records. In proof of this, it was shewn that, in the correspondence between Colonel Smith and the Secret Committee, in 1766, when, by some mistake, a private letter from that officer to Lord Clive was only alluded to in a letter from the Select Committee, Colonel Smith observed: "I have been made accountable to a public board for a confidential discussion of facts, which ought never to have transpired beyond the breast of the right honourable person to whom, and to whom alone, they were addressed."

Adverting to the complaint on the score of want of ceremony and respect in the reception of the new members of Council at Calcutta, he declared that he felt ashamed to occupy the attention

attention of the Court on charges of so trifling a nature; he remarked, "I am averse to parade myself, and have never used it." Higher honours had been paid to them than had ever been paid to persons of their rank in the country, as high even as had been paid to Lord Clive, or Mr. Vansittart, when they came as governors;—men, whose names must ever stand foremost in the memories of the people of India, and who merited as much from their employers as any who have filled, or are likely to fill, that station. He had written to the new councillors on their arrival at Madras to bespeak their confidence. The senior member at Calcutta had been deputed to meet them on landing at Kedgeree; one of the Governor-general's immediate staff had been sent down, as a mark of personal respect, to attend them; and the whole of the late Council assembled at his house to receive them. 1774. BENGAL.

He had desired time to determine whether he would accept the new government, or conclude his services to the Company with the close of the late administration, before the commissions were published; and Mr. Barwell being absent from Calcutta, he had requested that the meeting might be postponed from the Friday till the following Monday: this request having been acquiesced in by the Council, he did not expect it would have been urged as an objectionable part of his conduct.

Mr.

1774. BENGAL. Mr. Barwell did not join the Council till the Monday, when he expressed his full concurrence in the sentiments of Mr. Hastings, and declared that he foresaw no possible advantage to the nation, or to the Company, in debating the propriety of past measures, which had been submitted long since to the decision of the Directors, and for which neither himself, nor any of the existing administration, the Governor-general excepted, were held responsible.

Observation on differences as to the Rohilla war. As the war against the Rohillas was stated by the majority of the Council to have subjected the native inhabitants to unheard-of cruelties, inflicted by the orders of the Vizier, and to have been countenanced in a degree by the Governor-general, although there was proof from the records* to the contrary; Mr. Hastings proposed that sundry queries should be submitted to the commanding and other field officers who had served in the campaign, in order to ascertain the facts. He at the same time signified to the Board his readiness to submit the whole of his correspondence with Colonel Champion, provided that officer gave his consent. From replies to certain queries approved and put by the Board, it appeared that the Rohillas were not the original inhabitants, but a tribe of Affghans, of the Mussleman faith, following no other profession than that of arms; that

* *Vide* pages 406, 407.

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that the Gentoo inhabitants were not oppressed; that the Ryots were as much cherished as ever they were under any former government; that they returned to their plough immediately after the passage of the army, and appeared to be "as happy as ever;" and that the charges against the Vizier of outrages on the families of the Rohillas were proved to have been utterly without foundation.

The *animus* which governed the proceeding may be gathered from the following question, put by General Clavering to Colonel Leslie, passing by the extraordinary fact of such a question being proposed by a military man, and a member of the Government. "Did the army consider the war in which they were engaged as one that did honour to the British name, or such as disgraced it?" The Colonel replied, "I cannot answer for the opinion of others upon this subject." It was attempted to be shewn that the Rohillas were an ill-used people, deserving of every commiseration; it was, nevertheless, admitted, that they had broken faith with the Vizier, and that want of sincerity was part of their character. It was declared, that when Ally Mahomed was their head, he prevailed upon the Almorah Rajah and the other hill chiefs to assist him in his rebellion against the Mogul Mahomed Sha. They did so with 20,000 men. Their inferiority to the King's army on his approach, induced them to prevail on

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the Almorah Rajah to admit them into his country, which would afford them the greatest security: the access to it was by a narrow pass, where a small body of troops could defend themselves against a numerous army. They were admitted, and continued there until an invasion of the Mahrattas drew off the forces of the Mogul. Immediately on their retiring, the Rohillas seized the country of the Almorah Rajah, their ally, and carried away captive their handsomest women. It was stated to be a proverb in Hindostan, that "a Rohilla prays with one hand, and robs with the other."*

Another question arose on the appointment of an Adjutant-general, in which the majority opposed Mr. Hastings. Major Hanney had been nominated by the former Government. General Clavering declared that he would not employ him in that station, as he considered the late Government, under the by-laws of the Company, to have been precluded from making such an appointment. It will be recollected that the General, in writing from Madeira on his passage out, had recommended a King's officer.†

The offer of a sum of seven lacs of rupees by the Vizier, as a present to the troops engaged in the Rohilla war, was urged by the majority as an additional cause of complaint against the late Government.

* Consultations, Dec. 1774. † *Vide* page 445.

Government. The majority considered all presents to be prohibited by the Act of Parliament, but agreed to receive the sum in deposit, observing: "We cannot but lament the difficult and distressing situation in which the measures of the late Administration have reduced the present Government, by placing us between the strict prohibition of the law, and the earnest desires of the army: the unhappy consequences of an offensive war undertaken on such principles as that against the Rohillas, must operate in every direction. An innocent nation, without offence, stript of their property: one part of the conquering army engrosses the whole plunder, the other is disgusted; languor and despondency succeed; and when, at last, our troops return home, the difficulty of deciding between their claims and the prohibition of the law, is thrown upon the civil government!" 1774. BENGAL.

The Vizier returned to Fyzabad in the middle of December, from whence Mr. Middleton, the Resident at Oude, wrote the Governor-general on the 21st of that month, that fifteen lacs had been received by him from the Vizier, and forwarded to Calcutta. The health of his Highness confined him wholly to his private apartments; it rapidly declined, and on the 26th January 1777, he expired, at six in the evening. His eldest legitimate son, MEERZA AUMANEE, supported by the Supreme Council, succeeded

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to the musnud, under the title of AUSUF-UL-DOWLAH.

As the Council considered that the old treaty ceased at the death of the late Vizier, they resolved that a new defensive treaty should be entered into. After a tedious negociation, in the course of which Ausuf-ul-Dowlah evinced the most fluctuating disposition, seven articles were agreed upon on the 21st of May. The Company thereby acquired the exclusive right to the rich zemindary of Benares, without being encumbered with any new engagements or loading them with additional expenses. The revenues amounted to Rupees 1,23,72,656, and were to be paid by the Rajah Cheyte Sing in monthly payments, as a net tribute, without rendering any accounts of his collections, or being allowed to enter any claim for deductions. The Nabob agreed to pay 2,60,000 rupees per month for a brigade of the Company's troops, which was an addition of half a lac to the former allowance. The important point was gained of his consenting to dismiss all foreigners from his service, and his engaging to deliver up Cossim Ally Cawn and Sumroo, the assassin of the English at Patna, should they ever fall into his hands. The provinces of Corah and Allahabad were to remain with the Nabob.* Instructions were sent to Colonel

* The treaty was concluded by Mr. Bristow, whose conduct on the occasion was highly applauded by the Supreme Government.

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Colonel Galliez to continue with the brigade in the territories of Oude for their defence, and for that of the provinces of Corah and Allahabad, should the Nabob require it. Hostilities had for some time been carried on between Nudjiff Cawn, the Rajpoots, and Jauts, and they had alternately sought an alliance with the Nabob in support of their respective views. The latter, jealous of Nudjiff Cawn, had evinced a disposition to join his opponents. The grand object of the Council was to preserve a good understanding between the Vizier and the other neighbouring powers, for which purpose Mr. Bristow was ordered to take the necessary measures, and at the same time to urge the Nabob to attend to the good government and improvement of his dominions.

Views of the Court of Directors on proceedings of the Council.

The Directors conveyed the expression of their sentiments on various parts of Mr. Hastings' administration, which had been subjects of animadversion and difference with the new Council. They considered, that although the provinces of Corah and Allahabad were reserved to the King by the treaty of 1765, his Majesty did not acquire a right to resign them into the hands of the Company's enemies. As the Vizier was the first officer in the empire under his Majesty, and the territories in question were formerly held by him, it was an act of great propriety to commit them again to his management, when the King

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King could not hold them in his immediate control. The King having withdrawn himself from the Company's protection, abandoning the possessions assigned to him, and given every countenance to the depredations of the Mahrattas, the Court entirely approved of the payment of his tribute being withheld. The principle of self-preservation warranted it, as the possessions would necessarily have fallen into the hands of the Mahrattas. Upon these grounds the Directors confirmed the treaty of Benares, and directed that no further remittance should be made to the King. The highest opinion was entertained of the honour and integrity of Mr. Hastings, nor did a suspicion exist that any corrupt motive led to the agreement with the Vizier. In a political point of view, the Court did not consider the engagements with the Vizier to be unexceptionable; but they trusted that his Excellency would now be enabled to repel the Mahrattas, should they repeat their incursions. The Vizier formed a barrier to the Company's possessions. The Directors viewed the treaty of Allahabad as compelling the Government to aid the Vizier in defending his dominions, but not in the prosecution of new conquests, or any warlike enterprises; all advance beyond his frontier being absolutely prohibited, as also the employment of the Company's troops, on any pretence whatever, in such an undertaking.

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The conduct of the Rohilla chiefs in refusing to fulfil their solemn engagements with the Vizier, was admitted to have drawn upon them the calamities which they had suffered: but the Court deprecated the aid given by the Government with the Company's forces as founded on wrong policy, as being contrary to the instructions of the Court frequently repeated for keeping their troops within the provinces, and to the general principles they desired to maintain. The recall of the troops was consistent with the orders from home; but the hasty manner of recalling them, as determined upon by the majority in Council, the Court considered might have been attended with inconvenience to the public service.

With regard to the correspondence of Mr. Hastings, the Court were of opinion that the whole should have been laid before the Council. They observed with regret the differences that had arisen amongst the members, and they trusted that a sense of duty would animate them to an exertion of their utmost abilities, in the conduct of the important affairs entrusted to them, with the spirit of harmony and cordiality so essential to the welfare of the public interests, and to the prosperity of the Company.*

As to the donation of seven lacs by the Vizier to the troops, the Court disapproved generally of all presents to the army, but intimated that in the

* Letter to Bengal, March 1775.

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Whilst the Court of Directors were inculcating a spirit of cordiality amongst the members of the Supreme Government, events were occurring abroad that strengthened the existing feelings of hostility, and widened the breach between the Governor-general and the majority of the Council.

Nundcomar. Nundcomar, whose name will be familiar to the reader, fully alive to the differences which existed in the Council, and aware of the party composing the majority, waited upon Mr. Francis, on the morning of the 11th of March, scarcely four months after the inauguration of the new Government, and delivered to him a letter, addressed to the Governor and Council, "demanding of him, as a duty belonging to his office, as a councillor of the state, to lay it before the Board." Mr. Francis presented the letter at the meeting of the Council that day, and stated that he conceived he could not, consistently with his duty, refuse to receive such a letter; that he was unacquainted with its contents; that it was given to him publicly, in the presence of a considerable number of persons; and that the Rajah's request was interpreted to him by three different persons.

The letter from Nundcomar recapitulated various

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rious circumstances connected with his being deprived of the office of Naib Dewan, and the substitution of Mahomed Reza Cawn, who, he alleged, had been guilty of acts of great violence and oppression. That when Mr. Hastings first arrived from Madras, he promised him his support; but when the new councillors entered upon their office, he changed towards him, and debarred him his presence. That Mahomed Reza Cawn, being charged with extensive embezzlement, proposed making a present of ten lacs of rupees to Mr. Hastings, and two to himself; and that Mr. Hastings, on being acquainted therewith, made answer, "that he could not suspend an inquiry into the misappropriation of crores of rupees for such a sum, and that it was proper the Government money should be recovered;" he likewise stated that he was informed Mahomed Reza Cawn should not be released from confinement till the points in question were decided upon: nevertheless, a few days afterwards, Mahomed Reza Cawn was set at liberty, the inquiry into his conduct dropped, justice not being done in the the complaints that had been preferred against him.

In addition to this statement, Nundcomar specified particulars, which comprised presents he asserted to have been made to Mr. Hastings, amounting to 3,54,105 rupees.

Mr. Francis, on being asked by Mr. Hastings, whether

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On the 13th of March, Nundcomar addressed the secretary, transmitting a letter which he requested might be delivered to the Governor and Council, and opened in their presence. It referred to his letter of the 11th, and expressed his desire to appear before the Council in support of its contents; he stated that he had no other object than the prosperity of the Company, and that he had warned former Governments that, by their immediate attention to private emoluments, the country would suffer; that Mr. Hastings, till he had been informed by him of the state of affairs, was well pleased with him; but that, when he had acquired this knowledge, he no longer consulted him, and instead of his patron, became his enemy, and acted as such; becoming inattentive to the welfare of the country, and the enrichment of the state, making his own private emolument the rule of his conduct.

On the proposition of Colonel Monson, supported by General Clavering and Mr. Francis, it was determined that Nundcomar should be called before the Council, to give proofs of the charge against the Governor-general. Mr. Hastings declared that he would not sit at the Board in the character

character of a criminal, neither would he acknowledge the members of the Board to be his judges, but looked upon them as his accusers; he left it to them, if they pleased, to form a committee for the investigation; he resolved not to sit in Council to hear men, collected from the dregs of the people, give evidence, at the dictation of Nundcomar, against his character and conduct. Mr. Barwell objected to Nundcomar's being called in, and contended that the Supreme Court of Judicature was the proper tribunal for examining and deciding upon points of such a nature. He also suggested that Nundcomar should be informed that he was expected to support whatever he might set forth as evidence adduced before one of the judges; and that, unless he did so, his complaint would be rejected as a libel. The proposition for his appearance before the Board was, nevertheless, persevered in, for the extraordinary purpose of enabling them to judge whether the nature of the evidence he had to produce would be thought sufficient. Mr. Hastings quitted the Council. Mr. Barwell remarked, that it was then five o'clock; that he considered the Council to be dissolved; and unless he received a summons, according to the usual form, he should not partake in the debates: he then withdrew. The majority determined that the Governor-general had no right to dissolve the Board, and that an adjournment could only be carried by a majority. The chair was accordingly

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ingly taken by General Clavering. Nundcomar was called in, and being asked what he had to offer in support of his charges, he replied, "I am not a man officiously to make complaints, but when I perceived my character, which is as dear to me as life, hurt by the Governor's receiving into his presence two natives of low repute, and denying me admittance, I thought it incumbent upon me to write what I have. Every thing is contained in the letter I have given in." Being called upon for other papers, to which he alluded, he delivered in a letter, purporting to be written to him by Munny Begum, in which she adverted to the favour that had been conferred upon her, by appointing her guardian; and, after considering what would be a proper offer, stating that she sent a proposal of one lac as an acknowledgment, that the Governor answered, "that he had not done what he had from motives of private advantage, but for the satisfaction of his employers. I pressed the present exceedingly upon him, when he at last said, 'very well; if you do think proper to make a present, give two lacs, as Maharajah (meaning you) engaged; otherwise, do as you please, you are your own mistress.'" One lac was stated to have been provided by Munny Begum, the other by a draft on Nundcomar. The letter concluded in the following terms: "for the future, let us take care, in the conduct of our affairs, to *consult and plan beforehand, that when we are*

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are called upon, no difference may appear in our representations and answers, and that I may conform to whatever you may say; let nothing of the secret part of these transactions be known to the Governor or the gentlemen of Council, or any others. The proverb is, 'a word to the wise.'"

A comparison being made of the hand-writing in the letter from the Munny Begum delivered in by Nundcomar, with one received from her at that time and produced by Sir John D'Oyley, from the Persian Department, it appeared that the seal was that of the Munny Begum, but that the hand-writing was not the same in the two letters. The majority observed, that the letter to Nundcomar had been written a year and a-half before, and the letter produced by Sir John D'Oyley within a few days. In either case there was sufficient proof of the delinquency of Nundcomar. If its authenticity be admitted, its contents establish the fact of a conspiracy on the part of the Begum and Nundcomar. If its authenticity be denied, the guilt of forgery against Nundcomar is placed beyond doubt.

Nundcomar being desirous to withdraw, the secretary was sent to inform Mr. Hastings, and to request that he would resume the chair. The Governor-general refused to acknowledge the message as coming from the *Council:* he returned his compliments to General Clavering, Mr. Monson, and Mr. Francis, but declined to meet them at so late

1775. late an hour of the night, intimating that when he
BENGAL. could summon a full Board (Mr. Barwell being in the country), he would do so, and hoped to have the honour of meeting them in the Revenue Department the following day.

Upon such evidence as had been adduced, and without any further deliberation, the majority resolved that the sum of three lacs forty thousand rupees had been received by the Governor-general; that of right it belonged to the Company, and that Mr. Hastings should be required to pay into the Company's treasury the amount for their use. The secretary forthwith waited upon Mr. Hastings with the resolution; but he refused to receive it as a resolution of the Board, and would give no answer to it. Upon which the three members ordered, that the whole of the papers should be placed in the hands of the Company's attorney, for the purpose of counsel's opinion being taken as to the best mode of proceeding to recover the amount from Mr. Hastings.

On the 11th of April, Nundcomar was accused before the Judges of the Supreme Court, of being party to a conspiracy against the Governor-general and others, by making a man against his will write a false petition injurious to their characters, and sign an account of bribes pretended to be given to them. On the following day, an examination took place before the Judges, which lasted from eleven in the morning until eleven at night.

Mr.

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Mr. Hastings having been required to attend a meeting of the Judges at Sir Elijah Impey's, addressed a letter to General Clavering, requesting that he would take the chair with the other members and despatch the current business. The General having proceeded with what required immediate attention, the three members wrote Mr. Hastings from the council-chamber. They adverted to a letter from Mr. Fowke, relative to the conspiracy, and as they conceived that an investigation, which could demand the absence of the Governor and Mr. Barwell from Council, must be of great moment, if not interesting to the safety of the state, they determined to continue in Council till apprized of the issue. Mr. Hastings replied that, having received a letter from the Chief Justice and the Judges, the preceding night, informing him that a charge had been exhibited upon oath before them against Messrs. Fowke, Rajah Nundcomar, and Radachurn, for a conspiracy against himself and others, he and Mr. Barwell, to whom a like notification was made, had attended, and that he was sorry the three members should have thought it necessary to remain in Council until informed of a subject and issue of an inquiry, which they would perceive had no relation to the safety of the state, nor to any circumstance that required their present attention.*

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* Consultations, 19th April 1775.

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The circumstances appeared so well attested, that there was thought sufficient reason for binding over the accused to take their trial at the following assizes. Notwithstanding these facts, General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, accompanied by Mr. Fowke and others, went to Nundcomar's house, on a formal visit to him, an honour which he had never before received from those gentlemen, or from any previous administration. They also appealed to public opinion in support of their judgment against the Governor-general. Mr. Hastings, in the following terms, desired to submit his case to that criterion. Writing to the Directors, he observed:

"It is in your power, honourable Sirs, to obtain that opinion. There are many men in England of unquestionable knowledge and integrity, who have been eye-witness of all the transactions of this government in the short interval in which I had the chief direction of it. There are many hundred in England, who have correspondents in Bengal, from whom they have received successive advices of those transactions, and opinions of the authors of them. I solemnly make my appeal to these concurring testimonies, and if, in justice to your Honourable Court, by whom I was chosen for the high station which I have lately filled, by whom my conduct has been applauded, and through whom I have obtained the distinguished honour assigned me by the Legislature itself, in my nomination

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mination to fill the first place in the new administration of India, I may be allowed the liberty of making so uncommon a request, I do most earnestly entreat that you will be pleased to call upon those who, from their own knowledge or the communications of others, can contribute such information, to declare severally the opinions which they have entertained of the measures of my administration, the tenour of my conduct in every department of this government, and the effects which it has produced, both in conciliating the minds of the natives to the British government, in confirming your authority over the country, and in advancing your interest in it. From these, and from the testimonies of your own records, let me be judged, not from the malevolent declamations of those who, having no services of their own to plead, can only found their reputation on the destruction of mine."

On the 6th May, Nundcomar was committed to jail, in order to undergo a trial at the ensuing assizes, upon a charge of forgery exhibited against him by a merchant of Calcutta. On the 9th of that month, the majority of the Council determined to displace Munny Begum from the office of Guardian of the Nabob, upon the alleged ground that she had overcharged the ministers, in her account of arrears due from the estate. This fact also seemed to throw suspicions upon the truth of her letter to Nundcomar, before alluded to,

1775. BENGAL. even if its identity had been satisfactorily established. Rajah Goordass, lately servant to Munny Begum, a young man of mean abilities, a Gentoo, and the son of Nundcomar, was nominated to succeed Munny Begum in an office, the rank of which was scarcely inferior to the sovereignty of the provinces.*

Nundcomar addressed the Council, pointing out the impossibility of his performing the ablutions which were essential before he partook of any kind of food; and stated that, even could they be performed, the place itself presented an insurmountable obstacle, being inhabited by men of different religion: he therefore requested to be removed.

The majority of the Council resolved to send the message to the Chief Justice, with the representation from Nundcomar. General Clavering observed, that the Judges were probably ignorant how much a close confinement might endanger the life of the Rajah, which was of so much importance to the public, for proving an accusation of venality against the Governor-general.

Mr. Hastings observed, that time could not then admit of his replying to the severe personal attacks made upon him by every member present, but that the attacks were not unexpected.

Mr.

* Letter from Mr. Hastings, 18th May 1775.

Mr. Francis proposed, that the shreriff or his deputy should wait on the Chief Justice, on the part of the Board, and desire that he would consider of granting the prisoner relief: Colonel Monson and General Clavering concurred in this proposition. Mr. Hastings dissented, as the same representation might be made by the prisoner himself, and he thought it would be improper that it should be conveyed to the Chief Justice through the authority of Government. 1775. BENGAL.

Sir Elijah Impey, the Chief Justice, previously to receiving the message from the Council, had been informed of the grounds on which Nundcomar refused sustenance, and had already given orders for his confinement being made in every respect as easy as possible: he had also taken means to ascertain from Pundits, in the presence of the Judge who had come with him, how far the grounds of caste affected his case. From their answers, the Judges were fully satisfied that no grounds existed for altering the mode of confinement.

The Pundits having been requested to inspect the rooms in which he was confined, *viz.* the two rooms usually occupied by the jailor, who had given them up to the Rajah, expressed it as their opinion, after examining every part, that he would not lose caste by eating or drinking, or performing ablution, but that he would be obliged to perform *prauschit* (penance).

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In communicating this to the Council, the Chief Justice observed, that he had forwarded the result for their information, in order that he might not appear to be wanting in the attention which he should always give to any message from them, as well as to prevent their being deceived by improper suggestions. He assured the Board, that the Bench would be prepared to yield even to prejudices, if national and deep-rooted; but that they could not suffer the pretence of religion to be set up for the purpose of eluding the ordinary course of law. He stated, that the Judges were happy in the opportunity of vindicating themselves from any surmise of rigour, or want of humanity; but they requested that, in the event of the Maha Rajah having any other application to make for relief, he should address himself immediately to the Judges, for should he continue to address himself to the Board, that which could, and would only be obtained from principles of justice, might have the appearance of being obtained by the means of influence and authority, *the peculiar turn of mind of the natives being, to expect every thing from power and little from justice.* The majority of the Council intimated to the Chief Justice, that they considered the natives of India as the immediate objects of their care and protection, and that, to guard against any deception, they had examined the sheriff and his deputy as to the contents of Nundcomar's petition.

It

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It however appeared, that the examination of the sheriff and his assistant had been confined to the legality of the commitment, the place of confinement, and the propriety of yielding obedience to the Judges who made out the commitment. The Chief Justice satisfied himself by the most ample inquiries, that in the general opinion, the Maha Rajah's scruples were mere pretence. Sir Elijah Impey observed, that the bounds between the authority of the Supreme Court and the Council were of too delicate a nature to be discussed, unless there should be an absolute necessity to determine them. He did not question the authority of the Board in receiving petitions, and he did not desire that the Rajah's petitions should not be received, but when received, if any thing was required of the Judges or the Court, that he was to apply directly to the Judges, adding, "it is not sufficient that courts of justice act independently, it is necessary for the good government of a country that they should be believed and known to be above all influence.*

Nundcomar executed.

Nundcomar was found guilty, and suffered the extreme penalty of the law.

This event, after a lapse of fourteen years, was, in the course of the impeachment, on the 14th May 1789, dwelt upon by Mr. Burke, when he charged Mr. Hastings with having "murdered Nundcomar,

* Consultations, 16th May 1775. (Secret.)

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Nundcomar, through the hands of Sir Elijah Impey." This virulent attack led the Marquess Graham to move, and the House to adopt by a large majority, a resolution, that those words ought not to have been spoken. They were characterized as indecent, and such as could not have been tolerated in any other place.

Further differences in Council.

In the course of the investigation into the charges preferred by Nundcomar against the Governor-general, Cantoo Baboo, the banian of Mr. Hastings, was summoned to attend the Council on the 13th of March. When it reached him he was with the Governor-general, who prevented his attendance. General Clavering on the 20th (Mr. Hastings being present) submitted a motion, that Cantoo Baboo had been contumacious in not obeying the summons, and that he should now be brought before the Council. It was objected to, first, because this intention had been concealed from the members of the Council until its meeting, and secondly, that the Council had met for the special purpose of considering advices from the Vizier, which business was now proposed to be set aside, that personal feelings of hostility to the Governor might be indulged. The motion was, nevertheless, carried for the attendance of the Banian, upon the plea that the Council was assembled on matters connected with the revenue, and that Cantoo Baboo was a farmer. Mr. Barwell defended the Banian from any intentional disrespect to

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to the Board, and declared that he considered the plea of summoning him on account of his being a farmer, was the application of a legal power to an illegal purpose. The Banian having attended and declared that he should have obeyed the summons, had not the Governor-general interdicted him, withdrew. General Clavering then stated to the Council, that Mr. Hastings had threatened him for proposing to punish the Banian by putting him in the stocks, and he had also declared, that if any thing was meant personally he would make him answer for it with his life. He therefore moved that Cantoo Baboo be placed in the stocks.

Mr. Hastings then stated, that General Clavering having before proposed that the Banian should be placed in the stocks, and that in the language of a menace, he had declared that if the General attempted any thing in his own person and by his own authority, "I would oppose it personally at the peril of my life, and that if he made use of law, I would meet him by law." General Clavering disavowed having intended any menace. The Council, on the motion of Mr. Barwell, adjourned.

These proceedings in the Secret Department were followed by others in the Revenue, equally involving personal altercations, and attacks on the Governor-general. The Rannee of Burdwan having visited Calcutta on some affairs connected with the district, addressed the Government requesting

1775. BENGAL. questing that a khilaut might be conferred. Mr. Francis accordingly moved, that a day might be fixed for the purpose of conferring one upon her and upon her son also (an infant), and upon her servants according as it was understood to be the custom. Mr. Barwell remarked, that no such motion had ever been made since the Company's succession to the Dewanny. It was the invariable custom to hold up the head of the Government in that light to the natives. A voluntary compliment to a person who, like the Rannee, had no right to it, might be left to the pleasure of the Governor. The grant was however supported by General Clavering. Mr. Hastings felt it to be an additional instance to the indignities already offered him, and declared that he could not consent to the proposition. A day was nevertheless fixed, on which various statements in the English language were presented, to shew that payments had been made by a native on behalf of the Rajah of Burdwan to Mr. Hastings of 15,000 rupees; but when the accounts were demanded by the Governor-general in the Bengalee or Persian character, they were not forthcoming, and the party alleged to have made the payment denied all knowledge of such a transaction.

The Governor-general adhering to his resolution to be no party in conferring the khilaut, and his banian having been summoned before the Council, and no assurance being given Mr. Hastings that personal

personal severity was not intended, he dissolved the Council and withdrew from the Board. 1775. BENGAL.

The majority proceeded to confer the khilaut upon the infant Rajah, who presented a nuzzar of nine gold mohurs. They also stated that they had felt called upon to interfere in the appointment of parties to fill the several vacancies in the provincial councils, as every day's experience evinced the necessity of endeavouring to break the formidable combination of reciprocal interest "which the Governor had established in his settlement, by accepting unwarrantable advantages himself and conniving at those which were received by the Company's servants. Although the degree of evidence was not such as we could entirely depend upon, we thought however we could scarcely be imposed upon by giving some credit to the reports voluntarily made to us by such persons as had neither courage to declare themselves openly against the late administration or privately to make known the true state of the Government. In the late proceedings of the Revenue Board, there is no species of peculation from which the Honourable Governor-general has thought it right to abstain."

Such were the unqualified terms in which the majority felt themselves authorized to record their sentiments on the conduct of the Governor-general. Astonishment will cease, that a spirit of harmony should have been little known amidst proceedings marked

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marked by such virulent and personal feelings. Mr. Hastings indignantly remarked: "To talk of persons having the courage openly to declare themselves against the late administration, is an insult on my situation. The fact is, that it requires courage in any man not to do it, it being universally believed that the surest means to obtain the friendship and support of a fixed majority of the Council, who have the whole power of government in their hands, is to lodge accusations against the late administration, and to refuse is the surest means of incurring their resentment. Promises and threats have been used by the instruments of the majority, particularly by Nundcomar, to obtain accusations against me." *

In alluding to various other instances in which the majority had evinced so decided an opposition, Mr. Hastings observed: "My adversaries have placed me in a situation peculiarly difficult and delicate. They have made me the butt of unceasing persecution for these seven months past, and have called down the whole host of informers from every quarter of Bengal against me. Yet when I have endeavoured to bring to justice, men charged with a conspiracy to ruin my fortune and blast my character with forged and libellous accusations, the same charge is retorted upon me by the gentlemen of the majority, although in all their

* Secret Consultations, 15th and 16th May 1775.

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their most violent attacks upon me they have made professions of the deepest concern for the honour of the Governor-general. This is the very wantonness of oppression; it is like putting the man to the rack, and exclaiming against him for struggling with his tormentors; while rewards are held out publicly to those who will offer themselves as my accusers. You cannot be surprised, honourable sirs, at these effects. Rewards and punishments in the hands of good men in power, are the most useful instruments for producing great and virtuous purposes; when employed by a wicked administration, they serve equally the ends of malice, private persecution and oppression." He disclaimed the intentions which might obviously be ascribed to the appeals which he made to the Court, as solely for his own vindication. "Had this been the sole object which I could have attained, much as I feel for my own honour, and great as my ambition is, to devote my future labours to your service, I should long since have quitted the scene of trouble in which I am involved. If the powers of the vast government which were formed for the purpose of concentrating the scattered and independent parts of your empire, and drawing improvements from it, and proportionable to so extensive a combination are employed only for the support of a faction or for the gratification of private vengeance, and if in the pursuit of such objects, your rights are exposed to a public and judicial

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judicial reference by one part of your administration for the sake of charging on the other the injuries which they may sustain in the discussion, it is my duty to appeal to your authority for the preservation of your constitution, not to your justice for the redress of a personal wrong.*

Mr. Hastings accused of favouring a proscribed Nabob.

The unfortunate spirit which existed in the Supreme Council was further evinced on the occasion of the Governor-general presenting a petition from Kureem Alla, who styled himself vakeel from Cossim Ally Cawn, praying that Government would interfere in obtaining from the estate of a native a sum of money to which his master laid claim. The money in question, if belonging to Cossim Ally Cawn, was to be viewed as the effects of an enemy, and the Governor-general accordingly proposed that the question should be referred for the opinion of the Company's standing counsel. Colonel Monson thereupon asked the Governor-general, whether Kureem Alla, who was the servant of a proscribed nabob, had received his permission to come to the Presidency. Mr. Hastings replied, that he had not his permission, neither did he know when he came, but understood that he had been at Calcutta some years. Colonel Monson then asked, whether the Governor-general knew with whom he

* Mr. Hastings to the Court, 31st July 1775.

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he had lived, and who had subsisted him. Mr. Hastings replied, that he neither knew by whom he had been subsisted, or where he had lived; that he had already told Colonel Monson, that in consequence of Kureem's extreme distress, a few days before he had given him a small sum of money, but before he should answer any other questions, he asked to be informed of the object of them. Colonel Monson replied, "I beg to answer the Governor-general's question by another question to him, which is, whether he thinks a proscribed prince has a right to send a vakeel to this Presidency to reside here? My object is to clear the Governor-general's conduct from any imputation that may be thrown upon it; all the world knowing the connexion that formerly has been between the Governor-general and Cossim Ally Cawn. I am more particularly anxious at this juncture to have this matter clearly explained, as I perceive many of Cossim Ally Cawn's adherents, and strenuous opposers of the English, stand forth as the arraigners of this administration, and receive many compliments and civilities from some of the most distinguished characters in this Presidency." Mr. Hastings declined acknowledging any obligations to Colonel Monson for the professed wish to clear his conduct from any imputation which might be thrown upon it, and stated that had he known the views of Colonel Monson, in proposing the questions, he should have felt it inconsistent

1775. BENGAL. inconsistent with his station to have answered such interrogatories. Kureem Alla was called and examined before the Council, when it appeared that the only sum he had received from Mr. Hastings was 100 rupees, three or four days previous to the present occasion. The proceeding was adopted to fix upon the Governor-general the unjustifiable act of countenancing the vakeel of a proscribed native of rank, and of still maintaining a communication with that native. Mr. Hastings brought the subject to the notice of the Court of Directors in the following terms.

"I shall not deny the connexion which formerly subsisted between Cossim Ally Cawn and myself, whilst he was Nabob of the Provinces. It is as well known to the world as the little advantage which I made of it.* More I shall not say on this subject,

* The facts alluded to were doubtless well known to the European community at Calcutta at the period Mr. Hastings was making his representation to the Directors; but half a century having elapsed since that time, it may be proper to support this declaration by a short extract from the report made by Governor Vansittart, of the proceedings which took place with Cossim Ally Cawn.

At a meeting of the Select Committee on the 22d March 1762, a proposition being made to instruct Mr. Hastings to demand payment of the twenty lacs stated to have been promised by Meer Cossim, Mr. Vansittart protested against such a measure. and represented the circumstances under which the idea of such a present arose. When the treaty was signed with Meer Cossim in the month of September 1761, the Nabob desired to make a present of twenty lacs to him and the other gentlemen of the Select Committee. Mr. Vansittart immediately and absolutely

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subject, unwilling to revive the remembrance of the calamities of his government, or to awaken the unhappy dissentions which attended them. Although I avow the unimportance of the refutation, I do not regret the opportunity which it has furnished me of setting before your eyes from this small sample, the distracted state of your affairs, and the temper and objects of the members who rule your present administration. From the moment of their landing, their aim was, by personal indignities, to provoke me to resign my station and leave them uncontrolled masters of the Government, or by accumulated attacks to blast my character, and to effect the same end by alienating your confidence from me. These are the principles by which they judge of almost every matter which comes before the Board, of whatever nature or importance; and for the truth of this I dare appeal to any section taken at hazard out of the Consultations. Thus the merest trifles impede the course of business, and swell the minutes of the public

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lutely declined it, both on behalf of himself and the other members of the Committee. When Jaffier Ally Cawn returned to Calcutta, and Meer Cossim was proclaimed, the offer was repeated, and again declined; but he was informed by Mr. Vansittart, that if his finances admitted of it, he might present the Company with five lacs in aid of their operations at Madras, to which the Nabob immediately consented. Mr. Vansittart further represented, that he returned from Moorshedabad without receiving directly or indirectly one rupee from the Nabob, or from any other person, and that he could aver as much for Colonel Caillaud and Mr. Hastings, who were with him.

1775. BENGAL. public proceedings; and points of real consequence, which require the coolest and most temperate deliberation, are warped and converted to instruments of personal violence and the support of a party system.

Prompted equally by duty and gratitude, I have hitherto resolved to bear my part in this distracted scene, and if I live I will see the end of it."*

OUDE. The affairs of Oude continued to engage much of the attention of the Supreme Government. The Nabob Vizier, suspecting the fidelity of Busheer Cawn, who commanded in Rohilcund, issued private orders for his seizure and assassination. Busheer narrowly escaped: he fled across the river, and proceeded to Agra, where he entered the service of Nudjiff Cawn.

Anoop Gyre and Aumroo Gyre, the two Gossain Rajahs under whom the late Vizier had left the country of the Dooab, openly shook off all allegiance to the government of Oude, and assumed an independent authority. The Vizier ultimately effected their removal from the Dooab, without entering into hostilities. But the affairs of Oude were in such a state as to induce the Government to desire Mr. Bristow would bring the subject before the Nabob, and urge upon him the absolute necessity of forming such a system, and laying down

* Letter to Court, 8th Sept. 1775.

down such regulations as would effectually extricate him from the difficulties and embarrassments occasioned by his irresolute and wavering conduct, and by the ambition of his minister Murteza Cawn. To provide means for meeting the subsidy on account of the brigade, tuncaws were obtained from him to the value of forty-five lacs per annum. The Nabob had recourse to his mother, Baboo Begum, who retained possession of the whole of the late Vizier's treasure. On the entreaty of many of the Vizier's friends, aided by the influence of the Company's Resident, the Begum gave him thirty lacs in ready money, and a release for the sum of twenty-six lacs, which he had previously received from her. This concession was made on condition of his engaging by treaty, ratified by Mr. Bristow, not to molest her again with demands for money. 1775 BENGAL.

The Nabob Vizier being satisfied that the only means by which he could effectually discipline his troops and secure their fidelity, was to put them under European officers, applied to the Governor-general, with whom arrangements were made for that purpose.*

Many of the officers who joined him in the month of March, found that the sepoys cheerfully submitted to their commands. But the Nabob having Mutiny in the Vizier's troops.

* Letter, November 1775.

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having dismissed one of his corps of matchlockmen to whom five months' arrears were due, and his promise to pay them in fifteen days being considered by the men a mere evasion, four thousand of them riotously assembled and marched towards the Nabob's camp at Etawah. He went out to meet them in person. Failing in his attempt to satisfy them, and judging that his former passive behaviour had given rise to the present mutiny, he resolved on drawing out 15,000 of his sepoys for the purpose of cutting the refractory corps to pieces if they continued to resist. Mr. Bristow remonstrated against such a proceeding; but the Nabob was inflexible. The 15,000 regulars were drawn out to compel the matchlockmen to give up their arms and accept about 20,000 rupees in full for the pay due to them. The men having been reduced to great distress, and thinking the proffered terms most unreasonable, 2,500 of them stood their ground and supported an engagement for some time with great spirit—repeatedly repulsing their opponents: they were ultimately overcome by the blowing up of a tumbril, six hundred being killed and many wounded. Three hundred of the Nabob's sepoys were also killed, and some wounded. These iniquitous proceedings put an end to the mutiny. Ausuf-ul-Dowlah passed whole days in dissipation, being himself frequently intoxicated, and delighting in making his menials and favourites indecently drunk! He had little

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little disposition for business, and always referred to his minister Murteza Cawn, who was by no means favourably disposed to the Company.*

The Nabob while at Etawah was invested with the office of Vizier of the empire by a gratuitous appointment from the King. The Governor-general had anticipated that his affairs would have been restored to a state of regularity, and his forces to subjection, but dissentions had been brooding in his court, occasioned by the enmity of the old servants of the Vizier against his minister. Coja Bussunt, an eunuch of extraordinary talents as a soldier, who had disciplined and commanded a corps of infantry, consisting of fourteen battalions, was the chief of the party against the minister. He had quarrelled with him and proceeded to high words in the Nabob's presence, by whom they were apparently reconciled. In token of such reconciliation, Coja Bussunt provided an entertainment for the minister, at which they both became intoxicated. Coja Bussunt retiring on pretence of sickness, had no sooner left the room than five or six men rushed in and assassinated the minister. Coja Bussunt went immediately and reported the murder to the Nabob, who taxed him with being the cause, and ordered him to be beheaded on the spot. These tragical events occasioned an immediate alarm at the Durbar and in the camp.

* Letter to Court, March 1776.

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camp. Saudit Ally, the Vizier's brother, suspecting that his own person was in danger, as he had been refused admittance to the Vizier's presence, mounted his horse and fled with precipitation to Nudjiff Cawn. Fruitless endeavours were made to discover the real occasion of the murder of the minister. Surmises attached it to the Vizier, who, it was stated, wanted a plea to get rid of Bussunt Cawn. He was thus in a moment deprived of his minister, his general, and his brother. During the time that he was negociating with the Mahrattas to settle their claims to some countries west of the Jumna, he was carrying on the siege of Jhansi, then belonging to the Peishwa. Suddenly abandoning these objects, he quitted Etawah and returned to Lucknow. In this distracted state of affairs, Mr. Bristow was obliged to act. A part of the Vizier's troops marched to oppose the Mahrattas. The pay of the whole was in arrear and no funds provided for their discharge; his enemies attempted to excite his troops to mutiny; the native commandants, jealous at the appointment of European officers over them, fomented the disgust. The several battalions under British officers, though at a considerable distance from each other, at once broke out, as by a preconcerted arrangement, into open disobedience and defiance of their officers, and in rebellion against the prince. Their treatment of the Company's officers was as alarming as threats and the appear-

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ance of a very seditious spirit could make it. Some escaped privately and joined the British camp; others recovered their authority, and by means of two of the Company's battalions and other coercive measures, the mutinous troops were either reduced or disbanded. There still remained one general, of whose fidelity the Vizier had suspicion: this was Mahboob Ally Cawn, to whose control he had formerly committed the Corah province. When Mahboob Ally was ordered to march with two battalions under English officers against the Mahrattas, the Nabob applied to General Stibbert to detach two of his battalions to occupy that district in Mahboob's absence. Colonel Parker under the General's sanction, marched into Corah with his detachment. The equivocal conduct of Mahboob led Colonel Parker to imagine that he should render the Nabob an essential service by disarming his officers. 1775. BENGAL.

No proof, however, had been given of this suspicion being well founded; but Mahboob's troops having saluted Colonel Parker with twenty-one guns, the latter considered a salute so given to be a mark of defiance, and demanded in the Nabob's name the surrender of the guns; a refusal being given he attacked them within twenty paces; the affair lasted ten minutes, Mahboob's troops were routed, and Colonel Parker obtained possession of the whole park of artillery. It was stated that the Vizier had dismissed Mahboob from his service

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service and had declared him a traitor; thanking Colonel Parker for his services. It was nevertheless asserted that Mahboob had been since at the Vizier's court, and received with some degree of favour. Notwithstanding these untoward events, the Government were led once more to express a hope that the dominions of their ally would shortly recover from the state of distraction and anarchy into which they had been plunged.

Views of the Directors on the proceedings of the Government.

The Directors received with regret and disappointment accounts of the continued differences and dissentions in the Supreme Council. Far from disapproving a difference of opinion, they desired that each member should express his sentiments with freedom, and record his dissent to any measure of which he might not approve; but they observed with much concern the warmth of altercation exhibited, which discussions threatened to destroy that mutual confidence and respect so essential to the good of the public service.

They entirely disapproved distant expeditions and expensive wars; they drew a marked distinction between operations essential to preserve the honour of Government or the safety of the Company's possessions, and those undertaken for mere pecuniary advantage. They declared that the revenue regulations of 1772 were intended not only to exclude the servants and dependents of collectors from holding lands on farming lease, but

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but likewise the servants of all Europeans, and above all, Europeans themselves, without any distinction. Having fully investigated the charges against Cautoo Baboo, they adopted a series of resolutions which condemned the conduct of the President and Council in having permitted the banian to hold lands. They stated their conviction that sums had been paid by parties holding farms, contrary to the regulations, and conveyed their positive command that not any person in their service should presume to ask or accept, directly or indirectly, any present, gratuity, reward, or benefit from any farmer of the Company's lands or revenues. Nor was the farmer to receive more from the ryot than was specified in the pottah under the regulations. No farmer was to rent lands above a specified amount, hereditary zemindars excepted, and excepting also occasions to prevent inconvenience.

The regulations prohibiting the loan of money to zemindars, farmers, or ryots, were to extend to all servants of every denomination, and the offender was to be suspended. As monopolies in the hands of individuals in the out-settlements tended to distress the country, the Directors desired that measures might be devised to prevent any undue influence from operating to the prejudice of the fair trader.

The observations and suggestions submitted by General Clavering on the military expenses of Government,

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vernment, were highly applauded, and the conduct of the majority commended, as well as their indefatigable assiduity and laborious researches for the welfare of the Company and of the natives.*

* Letters to Bengal, December 1775, January and April 1776.

CHAPTER X.

1774-5.
BENGAL.
Expedition against Salsette.

DURING the negociation with Ragobah,* intelligence reached Bombay that the Portuguese authorities at Goa contemplated the conquest of Salsette. To avert such an event, the Council determined to avail themselves of the disposition of the inhabitants to deliver up that island to the Company. The Resident at Poonah was to make such proper representation of the circumstances as would prevent its operating unfavourably upon Ragobah, during the pending discussions on the terms of the proposed treaty.

The forces under Brigadier-general Gordon left Bombay for Salsette on the 12th December, and reached the fort of Tannah on the following day. Operations being forthwith commenced, it was taken by storm on the 28th. The Company's forces suffered considerably; amongst those who fell was Commodore Watson, the superintendent of marine. The loss of this gallant officer was greatly regretted by the Government, who caused a monument to be erected to his memory at the Presidency, and the Directors appointed

* *Vide* page 335.

1775. BENGAL. appointed his nephew a writer on the Bombay establishment, in testimony of their sense of the Commodore's services.

Supreme Government call for Reports from Madras and Bombay.

Before the enterprize had been undertaken, though not previously to its being determined on, a letter was received from the Council in Bengal, announcing their assumption of the Supreme Government under the Regulating Act, and desiring to be informed of the whole of the proceedings regarding Salsette and the general state of the Presidency. A similar requisition was at the same time made to the government of Madras.

The demand was immediately met by both Presidencies. The Bombay Council anticipated that their measures would be appreciated and applauded by the Governor-general.

The following extracts are given from the Reports.

MADRAS.

NABOB OF ARCOT.

The Nabob of Arcot is the Company's ancient ally. The possessions he holds, including the Tanjore country, are estimated by the best accounts,* at upwards of two crore of rupees. His force, by the best information we can procure, consists of ten battalions of sepoys, who may be considered as regulars, being commanded by European officers, accoutred

* It appears somewhat extraordinary, that with so close an alliance as that which subsisted between the Nabob, generally styled the Nabob of the Carnatic, and the Company, the Madras government should not have possessed more ample as well as more correct information.

tred and disciplined after the European manner, and a battalion of five hundred topasses. He has also four regiments of cavalry, with guns and artillery-men attached to each; and he is at present raising two more, besides the irregulars he maintains, which may be estimated between ten and twelve thousand. The regiments of cavalry are his best troops, having been disciplined by European officers lent to him from this establishment. 1775. BENGAL.

As the Company's interests on this coast are so materially affected by their connexions with the Nabob, and as misunderstandings and jealousies have long subsisted, which, notwithstanding our utmost endeavours to remove do still exist, we think it necessary to enumerate some circumstances, which may serve to give you an idea thereof. Some time after the capture of Tanjore, when we had reason to be alarmed by the preparations of the Dutch, in collecting a considerable force at Negapatam, and when an army of Mahrattas was threatening the peace of the Carnatic, we thought proper to represent to the Nabob the necessity of putting a garrison of the Company's troops into Tanjore for the better security thereof; but although every argument was used for that end, he would not consent to it, declaring that he considered the place sufficiently secure in the charge of his own troops. When any measures are adopted by the Nabob which are inconsistent with good policy or the interests of his country, we never fail to use our endeavours, by reason and argument, to dissuade him from them; but having no constraining power over him, the option still remains with himself, either to acquiesce in our ideas or to adhere to his own opinion. We are not only responsible for the safety of the Company's possessions, but we are also charged with the protection of the Carnatic, without any certain resources to provide for the exigencies of a war. To the Nabob we are obliged to look for money, provisions, bullocks,

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bullocks, and in short for almost every article necessary to enable us to equip and maintain an army in the field; and consequently it rests with him either to give those supplies or not, as the measures we recommend may coincide with his views. The truth of this was fully evinced upon a recent occasion, when we were threatened with an invasion by the Maharattas, as we have mentioned before. The Nabob seemed averse to every measure which in prudence we thought necessary to adopt for the safety of the country, and we were given to understand that, as his resources depended solely on the revenues of his country, in case that was involved in war, it would be out of his power to supply us with either money or provisions, and it was in consequence of this declaration that we applied to your presidency for a supply of money, when it was uncertain how soon the Carnatic might be attacked. The danger of such a system is too apparent to require animadverting on.

Connexions of the Nabob with other powers.

With regard to the connexions of the Nabob with the European and country powers, we enclose you copies of the treaties subsisting between him and the French and Dutch, and the Rajah of Travancore. We know not of any other alliances that he has entered into, independent of the Company. A correspondence has for a considerable time past been carried on between him and Hyder Ally Cawn, but from the jealousy which they entertain of each other, there appears little probability of a hearty union ever taking place.

French force at Pondicherry.

The force of the French at Pondicherry is nearly as follows: between nine hundred and a thousand Europeans, and about four hundred blacks, including Sepoys, Caffrees, and Sibbendis. Their revenues and customs are said to be one hundred and thirty-four thousand rupees a year, and their annual expenses two hundred and sixty-four thousand rupees.

With

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With respect to the Dutch, they have sent back the troops which they had collected at Negapatam, soon after the reduction of Tanjore, and have reduced their military establishment to its former force, and the Sepoys, which they had entertained at the same time, have since been disbanded. Dutch force.

BOMBAY.

The Portuguese at Goa have lately received a considerable reinforcement of troops from Europe on two men-of-war, and two others are expected with a further supply of troops on board. Portuguese force.

Alluding to their connexion with Broach, the Report stated: "The unwarrantable conduct of the Nabob of Broach, in evading a compliance with every article of a treaty entered into with him, in the year 1771 determined us, in the support and credit and interest of the Company, to procure effectual satisfaction; and in consequence we sent such a force from hence in the beginning of November, 1772, as reduced the town of Broach, which, together with the territories dependent on it, so far as the Nabob had possessed them, became the property of the Company.

Immediately after this acquisition, we fixed a Chief and Council at Broach for the government of the town and pergunnahs, and for the collection of the revenues, with a suitable garrison for its defence.

The Guicowar Mahrattas, whose capital is Baroda, is tributary to the Paishwa or Poonah Mahrattas, and shortly before the present divisions broke out amongst the latter, Ragobah appointed Govindrow, who is the brother of Futty Sing, to be supreme in the Guicowar government, and what was more material, he furnished him with an army to support his claims. With this force Govind Row soon gained The Mahrattas.

1775. BENGAL. gained possession of the greatest part of the Guicowar dominions, his brother, Futty Sing, shutting himself up in Baroda, about thirty coss from Broach, and in this situation they have continued for some months past.

Of the Scindy factory. At Tattah, situate on the river Indus, the Company have a factory, under a resident and one other servant, who are placed there merely to endeavour at selling their woollen goods, for which the Company have an extensive grant; but as their factory is itself very unimportant, from the small quantity of woollens that is annually disposed of, and as it is unconnected with the political government of the country, which is extremely bad, it is unnecessary to speak further of it here.

Persia. At the time the kingdom of Persia was in a flourishing state, the Company had factories for the vend of their woollen commodities in various parts of it, and enjoyed many valuable grants and privileges; but this trade decaying by the intestine troubles and divisions that tore that kingdom to pieces for many years after the death of Nadir Shaw, when neither the persons of their servants nor their effects were secure in the inland parts, their factories were at length withdrawn, and reduced to the single one at Gombroon, where the agent and council resided. The insults and oppressions they had experienced in the factories inland, followed them in some degree to Gombroon, which, together with the trade of that port, being turned into another channel, induced the Company to order, about twelve years ago, that the agency or chief settlement in the gulph should be withdrawn from thence, and established at Bussorah, where till then one or two only of the Company's servants resided, for the disposal of their woollen goods, which was done accordingly, and it has since continued so.

The Chaubs, (Arabs). At the top of the Persian Gulph, between the rivers which disembogue themselves into it, are the Chaubs, a tribe of

of Arabs, whose territories lay partly within the Turkish and partly within the Persian dominions, and his dependance on both, he (the chief) ought to acknowledge by paying an annual tribute; but from the situation of his country, which is very difficult of access, and from his being possessed of a marine force, consisting of about fifteen galivats, which is superior to that either of the Turks or Persians, he has at times refused to acknowledge his dependance on either. 1775. BENGAL.

The Company have a fort, with a sufficient garrison to protect it from the country powers, under the establishment of a chief and council. It is situated on the territory of a Malabar prince, called the king of Colastria, who granted a small district to the Company. This factory is kept solely for the purchase of pepper, sandal-wood and cardamoms. The territories of several other Malabar powers are adjacent to this, but they have lately been subdued. Tellicherry.

The Company have also a factory at Calicut, where one of their servants resides, chiefly for the provision of plank, masts, and timber. This factory is under the orders of that of Tellicherry. Calicut was subject from time immemorial to a prince called the Zamorin, till the last year, when it was taken by the forces of Hyder Ally, with the rest of the Zamorin's dominions, who fled no one knew whither. Calicut.

In the progress of the negociation with Ragobah, he consented to make a deposit of a certain sum in consideration of the military aid he was to receive from the Government. Being unable to fulfil the condition, he consented to a treaty, which was concluded on the 6th March, ceding for ever to the Company, Bassein, Salsette, Jambooseer, and Orpad, with the islands of Caranja, Canary, Elephanta, and Hog Island. In consideration of these Treaty with Ragobah.

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these cessions, he was to be assisted with a force of not less than 2,500 men, of which 700 were to be Europeans, and a train of artillery: 1,500 only were to be immediately supplied, and the rest, if wanted, afterwards.* A force under Colonel Keating, consisting of 1,500 rank and file, was accordingly sent to his aid.

The Bombay Government, in advising the Home authorities of their proceedings, requested, in consequence of "the many services they had in hand, in which the European soldiers are undoubtedly the life of the cause," that a supply of recruits might be sent out to them.

Before the detachment could join Ragobah, his enemies, through bribery and other means, had induced many of his troops, who were mostly Arabs, to desert him. They then attacked the quarter where he was posted, and ultimately obliged him (he not knowing how far the treachery had spread) to fly, with a body of 1,000 horse, towards Cambay. The Nabob of that place, seeing his situation, and dreading the power of his enemies, refused to admit him. By the advice of the Company's agent at Cambay, he made his way towards Bownagur, where he found a vessel belonging to the Company, in which he embarked on the 23d February. He reached Surat in safety, and was received as an ally and friend of the Company. Two principal chiefs in his army, Conderow and

He is obliged to fly.

* *Vide* Printed Treaties, p. 540.

and Govindrow, with a force of not less than 25,000 men, being within forty coss of Cambay, and still in his interest, and many others being likely to join them, the Bombay Government acceded to the desire of Ragobah, that he should proceed to Cambay, accompanied by Colonel Keating, where he anticipated success against the enemy. They left Surat on the 15th March; in the interim, by supplies from Madras, the force under Colonel Keating was increased to 2,500. The junction was effected on the 28th April, when they proceeded towards Ahmedabad, instead of Poonah, as contemplated by the Council. Various causes, followed by the setting in of the monsoon, protracted the termination of the operations, which it was confidently anticipated would restore Ragobah to full authority at Poonah, as chief of the Mahrattas. The accession of revenue arising out of the cessions, was expected to make Bombay "turn out annually advantageous and profitable, instead of being a burthen to the Company." 1775. BENGAL.

While the Council were awaiting the opening of the season to renew the campaign, they received a dispatch on the 12th August from Bengal, censuring the whole of their proceedings, and positively requiring that their designs should be relinquished, and their forces withdrawn to their garrisons, let affairs be in what situation they might, unless their safety should be endangered by an immediate retreat; at the same time plainly

1775. BENGAL. hinting, that unless the commands of the Supreme Government were punctually complied with, they should exercise the authority vested in them by the Act, in support of their controlling power over the political concerns of the Company in India.

The Governor-general wrote at the same time to Sacaram Bapoo, the chief of the confederacy against Ragobah at Poonah, acquainting him of the total want of authority and power on the part of the Bombay Presidency to act as they had done; and the Supreme Council deputed Lieutenant-colonel Upton to Poonah in the character of plenipotentiary, for the purpose of concluding a treaty with the confederates there.

The Council at Bombay felt indignant at the manner in which the Supreme Government had exercised their new powers, ignorant as they confessed themselves to be of the affairs connected with the Mahratta states, and the interests of the parties at Poonah. They observed that their deputing an officer, even less conversant with the relation in which the Company stood towards the Mahratta states than the Government of Bengal itself, was calculated to place the whole of the Company's affairs in a state of danger, and unnecessarily to degrade the authority of the Bombay Presidency.

They represented to the Supreme Government in the month of July, that the Company's forces had

had in every engagement gained advantages over the enemy, but in consequence of Ragobah's troops proving far less efficient than was anticipated, they requested a supply both of men and money, to secure the advantages which could not fail to accrue to the Company. A similar application was made to Madras. Another communication was addressed by the President of Bombay, on the 6th of August, to the Governor-general and Council, advising them of the advantages obtained through Futty Sing, the Guicowar, having quitted the ministerial party at Poonah, and concluded a treaty with Ragobah, to whom he was to furnish such troops and money as had been usually supplied by the Guicowar to the Paishwa. Notwithstanding these altered circumstances, General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis supported the order for the Bombay troops being withdrawn. They also interdicted the supply of aid from Madras. Mr. Hastings considered that the changed situation of Ragobah authorized the required assistance. This difference of opinion from what he originally expressed, having drawn down on him the severe animadversions of the majority, he stated that in discussing a point so important to the safety of the Company's interests, he felt it to be of little moment, whether his opinions, which had no weight in the political measures of the existing administration, were exactly consistent with each other or not, yet it concerned

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Success of Company's forces in favour of Ragobah.

Majority Supreme Council support order for withdrawal of Company's troops in aid of Ragobah.

Mr. Hastings differs.

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his credit to defend them, and he accordingly referred to his former proceedings in proof that there was nothing inconsistent in the opinions he had given. The majority still determined that no reinforcements should be sent from Bengal or Madras, but agreed to extend the pecuniary supply to twenty lacs.

The Nabob of the Carnatic having expressed an earnest desire to be included in any treaty effected through the instrumentality of Colonel Upton, the Bengal Council consented to the Nabob's deputing Mr. Chambers from Madras to Poonah, for the purpose of conferring with Colonel Upton, on the Nabob's intentions.*

Col. Upton reaches Poonah.

The latter officer reached Poonah on the 30th December. The negociation proving unsatisfactory, he made various references to the Government at Bombay, to ascertain their views on the general question. That Government had resolved, notwithstanding the peremptory orders from Bengal, to continue the Company's forces with those of Ragobah, which were encamped at Surat, until a treaty should be concluded.

Retires to Bombay; which government is authorized to negociate with Ragobah.

Colonel Upton being at length constrained to retire to Bombay, the Supreme Government determined to remove the restrictions imposed upon the subordinate presidency, and authorised the Bombay Council to conclude a treaty with Ragobah. In furtherance of this object, a force was prepared

* Letter from Bengal, November 1775.

prepared at Calcutta to proceed by sea to Bombay. Instructions were also sent to Madras for the Council there to render all possible assistance. Communications were at the same time made by the Governor-general to Hyder, to the Nizam, Holkar, Scindiah, and other chiefs, urging them either to join in supporting Ragobah or to observe a neutrality. General Gordon at Bombay was to assume command of the troops belonging to the Presidency, and Colonel Upton those from Bengal. 1775. BENGAL.

These measures were scarcely determined upon at Calcutta, when intelligence reached the Supreme Council, from Colonel Upton, that the ministers at Poonah had agreed to a treaty of peace, which had been signed at Poorunder on the 1st March 1776. It consisted of twenty articles, the third of which declared that, in accordance with the wish of the Paishwa, the island of Salsette and the small islands adjacent were to be restored by the English, they receiving in exchange a country valued at three lacs of rupees, with the chout, in the neighbourhood of Broach, all subject to confirmation by the Bengal Government. That portion of the Guzeraut country ceded by Ragobah to the Company, was to be restored to the Paishwa.* Ragobah's army was to be disbanded within one month. In the event of his not acceding to this stipulation, the English were Treaty concluded at Poonah.

Vide page 511.

1775. BENGAL. were to separate from him. A residence, with a limited personal establishment, and an annual stipend being secured to him. The treaties with the Mahrattas, of 1739 and 1756, were to remain in full force. The Paishwa agreed to pay twelve lacs of rupees, in part of the expenses of the English army. The treaty was confirmed by the Supreme Government with the exception of the part relating to the surrender of Salsette, which Colonel Upton formally declared would not be given up, nor would the proffered territory in exchange be accepted by them.

Half the detachment prepared for service at Bombay, with upwards of two lacs of treasure, had been despatched from Calcutta before intelligence was received there of the treaty of Poorunder.*

Ragobah, as was to be expected, declared that he would never accede to the treaty. He referred to that which he had solemnly entered into with the English nation in 1774: he determined, therefore, to reject every other proposition, and to throw himself upon the protection of the British Government. The authorities at Bombay accordingly resolved to receive him into one of the Company's settlements.

The orders of the Directors fully authorized the retention of the cessions made by Ragobah. They condemned

* Letter from Bengal, March and May 1776.

condemned the policy observed by the Supreme Government towards the Bombay Presidency, and the interdiction of the aid originally intended to have been sent to that presidency from Madras.* 1775. BENGAL.

The Paishwa not having made his stipulated payment to the Company, Colonel Upton was directed by the Supreme Government to quit Poonah and repair to Bombay, from whence he was to carry on his negociations. The Bombay Council, as well as their representative at Calcutta, Mr. Taylor, most strongly protested against this additional indignity. After protracted and unsatisfactory discussions, the minister at Poonah, at the close of 1777, intimated, through Mr. Mostyn, the Resident from Bombay, a desire to come to some accommodation with Ragobah. The Government of Bombay adhered to their opinion that he was the rightful head of the Mahrattas, and that his elevation would alone secure the interests of that empire with those of the Company. The French, who had at this time obtained access to the Court of Poonah, exerted every effort, through M. Bellecombe the Governor-general of their settlements, to extend the French influence in India. He had sailed from Bengal to take possession of Mahé, and to confer with M. F. Lubin then at Poonah. French at Poonah.

In

* Letters, November and December 1776.

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In March 1778, a revolution broke out at Poonah in favour of Ragobah, in whose name a proclamation was issued for restoring peace and order. In July, the Bombay Council declared that the treaty concluded by Colonel Upton had been violated by the Durbar proceedings; and that they were consequently freed from its obligations. They also declared that measures had become imperatively necessary to defeat the intrigues of the French, who had been long exerting themselves in schemes hostile to the English.*

Government support Ragobah, and form a treaty with him.

They proposed to place Ragobah in the regency at Poonah, and that he should conduct the government in the name of the Paishwa. This latter arrangement appeared to be in consonance with the views of the Court of Directors.†

The necessary operations consequent upon this determination could not be commenced until the month of September. In October, a treaty was concluded with Ragobah, by which the Company were to assist him with 4,000 troops to conduct him to Poonah.‡

During these proceedings on the western side of India, the attention of the Bengal Council was called to the conduct of Lord Pigot, Governor of Madras, towards the Rajah of Tanjore; and to an

* Secret Letter from Bengal, April 1778.

† Letter to Bombay, July 1777. ‡ *Vide* Printed Treaties.

an appeal from the Nabob of the Carnatic in relation to the measures of the Rajah. The affairs of these two Native chiefs continue even to this distant period of sixty years to occupy the attention of the home authorities, including that of Parliament. 1775. BENGAL.

A brief reference will be made to the relation in which the Nabob and Rajah stood towards each other, and towards the Government of Madras, when the unprecedented event of the arrest and imprisonment of Lord Pigot took place.

Tanjore had been considered in the light of a tributary to the Nabob of the Carnatic, who exacted, as he did from his other tributaries, what his power enabled him. The Company were a party to the original treaty of 1762, and whilst bound to see it fulfilled, they felt it equally important not to support the Nabob in reducing Tanjore so as to bring it immediately under his Government. The Select Committee at Madras, in July 1771, expressed their desire to avoid being parties in subverting the established government of any power with whom the Company had political connexion. Should the Rajah of Tanjore be subdued by the Nabob, they felt it would be better to restore the Rajah or some more fit person of his family upon the throne, he paying a certain present and assigning territory as security for repayment of the expenses that might be incurred by the Company on his behalf. The Directors fully approved of this view. No sooner, however, had

1775. BENGAL. had the Committee at Madras expressed their intentions to the Court, than they determined to leave the Nabob, who was the inveterate enemy of the Rajah, to negociate personally with the state of Tanjore: thus, in point of fact, surrendering the Rajah's interests to the will and caprice of the Nabob. The Council intimated to the latter, that whatever might be taken from the Rajah in forts, money, or otherwise, should be left at his disposal. Tanjore was attacked and subdued. When intelligence reached the Directors of this event and of the treaty of 1771, they strongly reprobated the conduct of the Madras Council. They deprecated the estrangement that it would necessarily occasion on the part of the Rajah. They animadverted upon the extraordinary course subsequently pursued by the Madras Council, who, without awaiting the Court's views on their proceedings of 1771, declared Tanjore humbled; the treaty of 1762 to be positively annulled; and adopted a resolution to aid the Nabob still further, by withdrawing the troops sent against the Nalcooty and Marawar Polygars, and detaching them for operations against Tanjore.

These measures determined the Court to remove the Governor, Mr. Wynch, and to appoint Lord Pigot as his successor, to whom instructions were given to replace the Rajah of Tanjore on the musnud; he agreeing to admit a detachment of the Company's troops to garrison that settlement,

ment, as well as to ensure regular payment of the Nabob's demands, and to watch and counteract the intentions or intrigues of any European power in their attempting to form connections inimical to the Company's interests. An account of the garrison was to be laid before the Rajah every three months, and the surplus of the assigned lands, after defraying the proper charges, was to be faithfully restored to him. The Company felt that justice required the Rajah should be placed out of the power of the Nabob, at the same time that the former should not be protected in withholding the proper tribute that was due to the Nabob. 1775. BENGAL.

The Directors then expressed their views generally regarding the Company's territories on the coast. After the affairs of Tanjore were settled, the Council were instructed to nominate a Committee of Circuit, for the purpose of investigating the state of the Jaghire and the Northern Circars. They were to ascertain, with as much exactness as possible, the produce of the Circars, the number of inhabitants, the state of the manufactures, the fortified places, the gross amount of revenues, and the sources from whence derived; the mode of collection; the specific proportion received annually by the Rajahs or Zemindars, and that which custom had allotted to the cultivator in reward for his labour. A particular statement was to be given of the security which the native had

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had for his property; of the courts which existed for the administration of justice, and how far regulations, similar to those in Bengal, might be introduced into the Circars. They expressed an earnest desire to secure to the Rajahs or Zemindars their annual income, free from the necessity of maintaining an armed force to compel payment. The proportion of the produce to be received by the farmers was to be ascertained, and no more to be exacted.

These orders manifested an anxious desire to proceed upon sound principles, in effectually providing both for the security and happiness of the people, and the just and fair claims of the state. Subsequent events effectually checked the inquiry thus ordered to be carried forward, and postponed to an indefinite period the acquisition of the necessary data, upon which to form a right conclusion on the important measures which the Court had in view.

Lord Pigot took his seat as President and Governor of Fort St. George on the 11th December 1775.

The Council at the first meeting, expressed their opinion that great delicacy would be necessary in announcing to the Nabob the purport of the instructions with which his Lordship was charged by the Directors. After repeated interviews between the Nabob and the President, his Lordship frankly stated, that it was impossible to permit

Tanjore

Tanjore to remain under his management; that measures must be immediately adopted to restore the Rajah; and that troops would be ordered to take the field for such purpose. The Nabob represented that many groundless reports had reached Europe. He declared that the misconduct of Tuljaujee, in connexion with the Dutch, the Danes, Hyder, and others, together with his having assigned and mortgaged lands, dependencies of Tanjore, to other European nations, threatening to call in the Mahrattas to disturb and lay waste the Carnatic, and attacking the Nalcooty and Marawar Polygars, were some of the causes which had shewn the necessity of his acting; and added, the King "of Great Britain had sent to congratulate me on the success of my troops!" affording another proof of the inconvenience of the missions from the crown of Admirals Sir John Lindsay and Sir Robert Harland.* The Nabob closed his appeal by declaring that he would agree to put Company's troops into the garrison at Tanjore; that he had placed his life and honour, and those of his children, in the hands of the Company, and had fixed his residence at Madras; but to the proposition to give back the fort and countries of Tanjore to Tuljaujee, and to bring disgrace upon himself,—what answer could he give? He said, "I have been long a friend of the Company; my father's life was

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* *Vide* pages 291, 308.

1775. BENGAL. was sacrificed for them, my riches have been expended in their service, and I now beg from their friendship that they will have pity upon an old man's grey hairs!"

This appeal was calculated to interest the most indifferent person in wishing that the claim of the Nabob should be acknowledged, but it was in truth prompted by an implacable hatred to the Rajah of Tanjore, and a thirst for power and acquisitions.

Lord Pigot was not to be diverted from his purpose: he determined to carry the Court's orders into effect. The fort was garrisoned by troops under Col. Harper, and the Rajah set at liberty. His Lordship proceeded in person to restore the Rajah. A difference of opinion arose as to what military powers could be exercised by the President out of the fort. Sir Robert Fletcher objected to orders being given to Col. Harper to obey Lord Pigot. The Nabob at the same time urged delay until answers had been received from Europe, as he was sure no such orders would have been given had the facts been fully stated. Lord Pigot nevertheless proceeded to Tanjore, and issued a proclamation, restoring the Rajah, who, in addressing his Lordship, said, "Had I a thousand tongues, I could not express my gratitude." At this time Mr. Paul Benfield, whose name was so frequently before the public in connexion with the creditors of the Rajah, preferred a statement of his demand to the Council. Lord Pigot referred to the

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the Act of 1773, which he considered to recognise *just* claims only. His Lordship had suggested the appointment of a Resident at Tanjore, and submitted Mr. Russell's name for the office; Col. Stuart was opposed to his Lordship's proposition. That officer himself being proposed by the majority for the station of commandant of Tanjore. Lord Pigot refused to put the question of approval on the orders to Col. Harper to deliver over the command to Col. Stuart. The majority of the Board insisted upon their right to decide, and called upon the secretary, should the president persist in his refusal, to put the question to each member, beginning with the youngest. After the letter had been approved and signed, Lord Pigot took it from the secretary, and intimated that he should stop the matter where it was. His Lordship then charged Messrs. Stratton and Brook with issuing orders subversive of the established authority, and the majority with a desire to overturn the government. They protested at the same time in the strongest manner against the arbitrary act of Lord Pigot. The proceedings terminated in the arrest of his Lordship, and in his confinement at the Mount, under the orders of the majority. The admiral, Sir Edward Hughes was invited by the Council, who, as the majority, had assumed the government, to attend the Board on the 25th of August, in order that he might have explained to him the circumstances relative

1775. BENGAL. relative to so extraordinary a proceeding as the seizure of a governor. After hearing their statement, he requested to be furnished with a copy of the proclamation and of the Commission constituting the government of Madras. On the 27th Sir E. Hughes addressed the Board:

Reply of Sir Hughes.

In reply I have only to say, that, as a good subject, and a hearty well-wisher to our country and the Company, and as the known friend of all parties, it will be difficult for me to express to you my amazement and sorrow at such disagreements, productive of such extraordinary consequences. You may naturally be led to suppose, gentlemen, that situated as I am, and finding you in possession of the government of a presidency, I am ordered by his Majesty to communicate with you for the common cause, and for the welfare and interests of the Company. I shall join you in all such measures tending to those desirable ends, when you may find proper to call for my assistance.

On the same day the Admiral wrote to the Board, stating that Lord Pigot having claimed the protection of the King's flag, "I am to require, in his Majesty's name, that you give orders for his Lordship's safe conduct to my ship." On the 4th September Sir Edward Hughes attended a council of the government, when various questions were put to him as to his becoming responsible for Lord Pigot if his lordship should be given up to him. Sir Edward Hughes declined to answer any question until he received a reply to his letter of the 27th: one was accordingly written on 4th September, and placed in his hands. The Admiral's

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Admiral's reply was made on the 5th, and stated that the requisition for safe conduct to his ship being made in the King's name, no terms could be admitted. He could only repeat and again require, that safe custody might be given his Lordship to the Admiral's ship."

The Council sent the following reply to the Admiral:—

Proceedings at Madras regarding Lord Pigot.

As loyal subjects to his Majesty and faithful servants to the Company, we shall always shew the greatest veneration for the sacred name of his Majesty, and the utmost respect to the British flag; but, having no proof that his Majesty empowers any of his officers to require the removal of any servant of the Company in a similar situation with Lord Pigot, from under the authority of the Company's Government, we beg to add that this is another reason why we cannot surrender his Lordship.

The Admiral replied to the communication from the Council on the 7th September:—

I confess I should have been disappointed to have been told that you had any proofs before you, that his Majesty had empowered any of his officers to require the removal of any servant of the Company in a similar situation with Lord Pigot. I believe the case to be unexampled, and I feel in my heart that I have done my duty to his Majesty and to my country in making the requisition. I must leave the results and all ill-consequences with you.

The Supreme Government determined to support the majority as the legally constituted government under the Court's orders, a copy of which

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they transmitted to Lord Pigot, with the announcement of the resolution they had adopted.

The Council at Bombay having declared it to be their intention to support Lord Pigot, the Governor-general remonstrated in the strongest terms against the irregularity of their resolution, and the dangerous effect which might be produced by an appearance of disunion between them and the Governor of Madras.*

Colonel Monson being precluded by ill-health from attending the Council, the foregoing proceedings were sent to him for his information and concurrence; he expressed his sense of the attention shewn to him by his colleagues, but stated that he thought any opinion given when absent from his seat in council would be unconstitutional, he therefore declined to offer any opinion, although he had little doubt he should have united in the sentiments of the Board. This gallant officer removed to Hooghly for change of air, where he expired in the night of the 25th September.

Death of Col. Monson.

General Clavering had written to the Directors on the 23d of that month, representing that Colonel Monson's illness had long deprived the Board of his invaluable services. He stated, that the Government of Bengal had in fact been vested in the hands of Mr. Hastings and Mr. Barwell for an

* Secret Consultations, 10th September 1776.

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an indefinite time, by the Governor-general's casting vote: "men whose conduct you have censured in every letter of this season, but whose principles are so incompatible, that my duty to you, to the public, and to myself, oblige me to declare that I do not hold myself responsible for the safety of these provinces whilst the government continues conducted as it now is." He concluded by requesting that the King's ministers might be informed of his intention to resign his post of councillor and commander-in-chief, in the month of November or December 1777.

Resolution of Proprietors on Lord Pigot's case.

The whole of the proceedings regarding the arrest of Lord Pigot were reported to the Home authorities from Madras, on the 24th September 1776. On the 9th May following the General Court passed a resolution, highly disapproving of the removal of Lord Pigot, but at the same time recommending the recall of his Lordship and that of all the members of council, in order that their conduct might undergo a full inquiry. The resolution was passed by 414 votes to 317. The matter was likewise taken up in Parliament. His Lordship's death, which occurred on the 11th May, was, in a great measure, caused by the effect of the proceedings upon a naturally irritable frame. He was succeeded by Mr. Rumbold.

Orders of Directors as to proceedings of future Governments.

The Directors had resolved to order the restoration of Lord Pigot, and appointed Mr. (afterwards

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Sir Thomas) Rumbold second member of council, with succession to the government. In consequence of the embarrassment occasioned at this juncture by the proceedings of Mr. Benfield and other parties contracting pecuniary engagements with the Rajah of Tanjore, and with other country powers, specific commands were sent out prohibiting all persons from being concerned in such transactions. Regulations were likewise laid down for the guidance of the Council in future.

1. The opinion of the majority was to bind the minority; but in the event of equality of votes, the President was to have the casting voice.

2. Any question proposed in writing was to be put by the President, or, in his absence, by the presiding councillor.

3. In the event of the President refusing to put the question, the councillor next in succession was to propose it; and on his declining, the third member present, and so on.

4. All orders and instructions were to be issued in the name of the Governor and Council, although the Governor might dissent.

5. The Council was only to be dissolved by a vote of the majority.

6. No councillor was to be suspended, but by the votes of three parts in four of the members resident at the presidency. No governor possessing a commission from the Court was to be imprisoned or removed, except for felony, breach of trust, or unfaithfulness to the Company.

7. If the President refused to summon a council when requested by three members, then the secretary was to summon

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summon a meeting, on receiving a requisition for that purpose in writing.

8. Unless a council had been so summoned, no proceedings of a meeting, although of the majority, were to be valid.

9. No officer, civil or military, was to obey any orders from the government, unless issued in the name of the President and Council, countersigned by the secretary. Inquiries were ordered to be made into allegations that presents had been received by Lord Pigot; and Colonel Stuart was suspended for the term of six months, to admit of a full investigation regarding his proceedings.* Major (afterwards Sir Hector) Munro, was appointed commander-in-chief.

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Proceedings on a new Revenue settlement.

Another subject of difference in the Bengal Council arose on the question of a new revenue settlement. That which had been concluded in 1772 with the farmers for five years, failed to produce the expected improvement, because they had engaged at a higher rate than the districts could afford. The matter had occupied the attention of the Government in 1775: in November 1776, Mr. Hastings recorded a minute, jointly with Mr. Barwell, and submitted a plan for adoption in the provinces at the expiration of the then existing term. Amongst the proposed provisions were the following:—

Views of Mr. Hastings.

That all taxes which had been imposed upon the ryots since 1764-5 should be entirely abolished.

That the Twenty-four Pergunnahs should be sold as zemindarries

* Letters to Madras, 11th June and 4th July 1777.

1776-78. BENGAL. zemindarries by public auction, in lots not exceeding a jumma or rent-roll of 20,000 or 30,000 rupees. The revenue to be paid by the purchasers to be settled on an average of the three preceding years' collections, with an allowance of fifteen per cent. to be deducted for charge of collection and their profits. The revenue to remain fixed at that rate during the life of the purchaser, the Government having liberty to sell if the zemindar should be deficient in his payments.

That all the other districts in Bengal should be farmed out on leases for life, or for two joint lives, to such responsible persons as should offer the most advantageous terms, allowing the preference to the zemindars. It was not to be in the power of Government to change or deviate from them on any occasion, or for any pretence whatsoever. The continual variation in the mode of collecting the revenue, and the continual usurpation on the rights of the people produced by the rapacity or remissness of the Mogul Government, and in that of the English by a desire to acquire *reputation* from a sudden increase of collection, without sufficient attention to remote consequences, had fixed in the minds of the Ryots a rooted distrust of the ordinances of Government. No assurance, however strong, would persuade them that the laws which had no apparent object but the ease of the people and the security of property, could be of longer duration, unless confirmed by a stronger pledge than the resolution of a fluctuating administration.

Views of Mr. Francis.

Mr. Francis considered that the opinion of the governing power, being the proprietor of the soil under the constitution of the Mogul government, was erroneous, and that a *permanent fixed* tribute ought to be determined, instead of acting upon the principle of raising the greatest possible revenue

venue from the country, a principle which had prevailed from the acquisition of the Dewanny, and under which he was satisfied the Government had been living upon its capital, or in other words, had annually taken a portion of the existing wealth which ought to have been reserved for future production. He urged at considerable length, and with great ability, the necessity of establishing some general fixed system of policy for the government of the country, and not to aim at purchasing immediate advantage, inconsistent with the permanency of our dominion, or the welfare of the natives. It would be absurd, he observed, to propose a plan for the internal settlement of the country, without taking it for granted, in the first instance, that ere long it will be determined whether the natives of Bengal are to acknowledge one sovereign, or to be subject to one government, or whether they are to be left in their present state, divided between their native prince, claiming the title of soubahdar, whose government, the Company tell us, they are solemnly bound to support; the emperor, whose rights, as lord paramount, inherent in the constitution of the empire, have for a number of years been acknowledged by the Company; the presidency of Fort William, who hold the sword by agreement with the Nabob, as they do the grant of the purse from the emperor; and lastly, a court of judicature, exercising an unlimited jurisdiction

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risdiction through the provinces in the name of the King of Great Britain. The decision of this great question must originate at home. For the purpose of forming an internal settlement, it is sufficient to suppose that the undivided sovereignty shall be assumed and declared by his Majesty, whether directly and to all intents, or with a reserve of the actual government to the Company. The sovereignty once declared, the subsequent question, *viz.* in what manner it may be most expedient to exercise it for the permanent benefit of the governing power, will be relieved of a great part of the difficulty which now attends it."

Ten years had not elapsed since the Company stood forth in the character of Dewan, under the grant to them of the revenues of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa. It was too much to expect that either sufficient time had been given, or that means had been possessed by the Government, to enter upon the inquiry with a reasonable hope of arriving at anything like a satisfactory result, even under the suggestion of Mr. Hastings; still less could it be expected that the preliminary point insisted upon by Mr. Francis could be decided, at so early a period of the Company's acquisitions. The minute of Mr. Hastings was framed for a practical result; that of Mr. Francis, able as everything was which proceeded from his pen, contemplated a prospective measure, which

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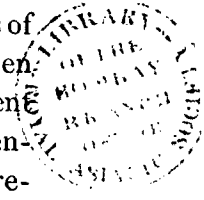
which he little anticipated would have required half a century to effect, and that the attempt at an earlier attainment of the object would be followed by the exclusion of the distinguished leader of his party from the councils of his Sovereign for more than twenty years.



Nothing final resulted from these proceedings of the Government. But the period drew nigh when the Governor-general felt that the new settlement would necessarily press itself upon their attention, and must be decided. He accordingly recorded a minute in the month of November 1776, in which he pointed out the necessity, before coming to a decision, of being previously furnished with accurate statements of the real value of the lands, and the grounds upon which they should be prepared. To obtain them he felt would be a work of labour requiring much official knowledge, some management, and unremitting application, in comparing and collating the accounts of the past collections, in digesting the materials which might be furnished by the provincial councils and dewans, in issuing orders for special accounts and other materials of information, and in deputing native officers on occasional investigations. He felt the impossibility of the Revenue Boards conducting a business of such detail, and that it could not be left wholly to the provincial councils, as it required uniformity in its design, authority in its execution, and

Further minute by Mr. Hastings.

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and an extraordinary share of responsibility to animate the zeal of those who should be entrusted with the charge of it. He therefore proposed that a temporary office should be constituted to execute the business, under the conduct of one or two covenanted servants of the Company, assisted by a dewan and other officers, either selected from the office of the khalsa, or occasionally chosen for special commissions. To ensure despatch, it was proposed that all orders issued from the office, when sanctioned by the Board, should be written in the name of the Governor-general, and that the control of it should be committed to his immediate charge.

Opposed by Messrs. Clavering and Francis.

This suggestion met with the most determined opposition on the part of General Clavering and Mr. Francis. The latter recorded sundry minutes in reply to that of Mr. Hastings. General Clavering declared it to be an attempt on the part of the Governor-general to assume an authority which he considered to contravene the constitutional form of the Council, and that the intention of the measure was to exact from the people the utmost revenue they could pay.

The proposal was at length carried by the casting vote of the Governor-general. Messrs. Bogle and Anderson; together with the Accountant-general, were to form the Board. Letters being proposed by Mr. Hastings to the provincial councils, calling upon them to aid in promoting the measure,

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measure, and that the members of the Supreme Council should sign them, Mr. Francis opposed the extension of such power to the councils, as unwarranted by law, and as being inconsistent with the general duties of a councillor.

General Clavering would be no party to deprive himself of any of the rights that had been assigned to him as a member of the Government; he protested against the intended measure; he declared he would not sign the proposed letters, and that, to the utmost of his power, he would render every person liable for every act done by them in virtue of an order issued by Mr. Hastings.

The letters were nevertheless ordered to be sent forward. Protests and rejoinders were recorded on the proceedings of the Government. The subject was closed by Mr. Hastings observing that he thought it had been exhausted, and referring to his minute for a reply to the arguments urged against it.

In announcing this measure to the Directors, the Governor-general and Mr. Barwell urged in their justification, that some preparatory means were necessary to the formation of the future settlement of the province at the close of the existing settlement. If the Council were not unanimous in their choice of these means, it was undeniably necessary that the choice of that part in which the constitutional majority coincided should prevail,

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prevail, and it was equally clear that the acts of such majority were the acts of the Government, and they considered that General Clavering and Mr. Francis, in refusing to be bound by the majority, were guilty of a breach of the law. "Unfortunately the power which we possess is but accidental, and its duration uncertain. The declared expectations of the change to take place in this government, with the arrival of the *Eagle* packet, favoured, perhaps, by the severity of your late censures on us, and the indulgent sentiments expressed to our opponents, tend to scatter doubts and distrusts in the minds of the people, to weaken our authority, and to sanctify every opposition to it."

Supposed illegality of Mr. Hastings' measure.

In the opinion of Mr. Farrer, the Company's standing counsel, the measure of investing Mr. Hastings with the proposed independent power was illegal and contrary to law.

In its progress, the conduct of some of the native aumeens, who had been sent into the interior for the purpose of collecting documents, was stated to be cruel and unjustifiable, and that they had beaten and otherwise ill-treated the natives. In order to ascertain the legality of their exercising what was considered to be such unbridled sway, General Clavering, in May 1777, advised the Directors that he had determined to support, in a civil suit, a native writer who had been ill-treated in the district of Rajeshaye.

General Clavering supports natives.

Differences

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Differences continued to distract the Council. The opponents of Mr. Hastings declared that he had never clearly avowed the object of the inquiry which he had instituted; they still urged its illegality, and his desire to raise the revenue at the expense of the zemindars, who he was charged with desiring to deprive of their inheritance.

He disavowed these motives; "I am entitled to credit, because, in the first place, I am certainly the best judge of my own intentions; and in the second, it would be the height of imprudence to make such a declaration on a point not ultimately depending on my will, if I really meant to act contrary to it. But I will not stop at this negative declaration. It is my earnest wish, and my united object, in the enquiry which I have set on foot, to establish an *equal*, an *easy*, and a perpetual assessment of the public revenue, to collect it through the zemindars, where they are capable of the charge, and to employ other means where they are not, still reserving to the zemindars a fixed proportion of the net revenue arising from their lands."

In reply, General Clavering declared, that Mr. Hastings evaded what he could not defend, and misrepresented what he avoided to answer; and lest the art with which his minute was drawn up, intended as it was to deceive those who had not leisure to compare documents, might throw a veil over facts, which it was vainly attempted to remove,

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remove, he should sit down to point out that his declarations, combined with his conduct, did in fact amount to nothing less than a subversion of the Government, and that he was convinced of the justness of the remark made by an eminent personage in England, on reading his defence of the Rohilla war, "that the arguments it contained would even have been unworthy of Mrs. Rudd."*

Mr. Hastings alluded to General Clavering's minute in the following terms: "it is beneath a reply. He may continue to revile me with language yet grosser, if grosser can be invented. This, with the other evils attendant on my present situation, while I continue in it, I must bear, and he knows it."

The Court of Directors having considered the various circumstances connected with the letting of the lands, as communicated to them from Bengal,† directed that only annual settlements should be entered into, and the lands to be let for each succeeding year on the most advantageous terms. In every

* This female was tried as an accomplice with the Messrs. Perreau, who were executed for forgery in 1775. Without questioning the delicacy of the comparison, it establishes beyond all doubt the fact that Mr. Hastings' opponents did not confine their differences to the council chamber, but were in correspondence with influential parties opposed to him in England, as the defence was not sent home till October 1774, the month in which the new councillors reached Bengal. *Vide* pages 410 and 419.

† *Vide* pages 413-425.

every disposal of the lands, they enjoined that a strict preference should be given, and every indulgence shewn, to the native inhabitants, and that no European, or the servant of an European, should be permitted to hold any share. 1776-78. BENGAL.

Demands were to be made for outstanding balances, but should cases requiring lenity arise, the Court authorised the remission of such part, or even the whole, as might appear proper in the judgment of the Governor-General and Council.

The Court cautioned the Government against sudden transitions from one mode to another, in the management and collection of the revenues, as being calculated to alarm the inhabitants. At the same time they admitted the importance of ascertaining with precision, as far as possible, what revenue could be properly collected from the country without oppression. As the distance of many of the districts from Calcutta, would render it necessary for the zemindars or farmers to treat with the provincial councils, or other agents of the Company, hereditary zemindars were to be continued, where they could with safety to the revenues, and were to enjoy their zemindarries on terms sufficiently moderate that they might maintain a degree of respect amongst their dependants. This object the Court directed might be kept in view in every agreement made with them. After having ascertained the various taxes or collections that had been imposed upon the districts since

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since the Company's acquisition of the dewanny, the Council were authorised to abolish the whole, or such part thereof, as might appear to weigh oppressively on the country. Wherever lands had been let at a reasonable rate, and the zemindar or renter fulfilled his engagements to the satisfaction of the Government, no such party was to be dispossessed of, or compelled to pay an advanced rent, without the most substantial reasons for such advance, and even then the occupant was to have the preference over all others, and to be suffered to continue at a moderate additional rent. But in all instances where the increased value should not be considerable enough to become an object to Government, no zemindar or renter was to be dispossessed or molested, but permitted to enjoy the fruits of his industry and improvements, and to renew his lease or agreement from year to year, without any increased rent.

If the provincial councils were not found to answer the intended purposes of their appointment, the Government were directed to form a new plan for the collection of the revenues, and submit the same to the Court's consideration.*

Only four months had elapsed from the despatch of the foregoing instructions to Bengal, when the Directors received an account of the measures adopted in pursuance of the Governor-general's minute

* Letter to Bengal, February 1777.

minute of November 1776. The Court lost no time in conveying the expression of their surprise and concern, that after seven years' investigation, the information was still so incomplete, as to render necessary another and still more extraordinary innovation than any of the former. The Directors remarked, that in 1769, supervisors were nominated expressly to investigate the subject. In 1770 controlling councils of revenue were substituted. In 1772, the office of Naib Dewan was abolished, natives were discarded, and a committee of circuit formed, who it was stated had ascertained, distinctly and precisely, what was necessary to be known—but now, two senior servants, with the assistance of a few natives, were to be employed to collect and adjust materials. The Directors did not disapprove of the attempt to get additional information, but expressed their decided disapprobation of the conduct of the majority. They observed that the Governor-general had no power to act upon his own responsibility—they fully concurred in the views of General Clavering and Mr. Francis, and were led to believe that the Governor-general had availed himself of Colonel Monson's death to act as he had done. They expressed their astonishment at natives being deputed on the intended investigation, and observed, if a committee of circuit and council of revenue, composed of the most intelligent of our servants, and armed with all the

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power of the Presidency, could not obtain the necessary information, from whence were the natives to acquire it?" *

The resignation of Mr. Hastings tendered by Mr. Macleane.

An incident had occurred shortly before this time, in England, which led to the belief that a change would have forthwith taken place in the Supreme Government.

On the 11th October, a letter was received by the Court of Directors, dated the 10th of that month, from Lachlan Macleane, Esq., to the following effect:—

"Gentlemen:—

"Mr. Hastings seeing the necessity of unanimity in the Supreme Council in Bengal, for conducting the affairs of the Company there, and for establishing any permanent system of government for the good and prosperity of that country, and finding from the unhappy divisions which have subsisted in the Supreme Council, that such union is not likely to subsist, and having anxiously, on every occasion, studied to promote the welfare of the Company, a conduct which he will ever continue, has from these motives authorised, empowered, and directed me to signify to you his desire to resign his office of Governor-general of Bengal, and to request your nomination of a successor to the vacancy which will thereby be occasioned in the Supreme Council.

"L. MACLEANE."

"London, 10th October 1776."

The Court, in order to satisfy themselves of the authority under which Mr. Macleane acted, in a matter of such very great importance, desired his attendance.

* Letter from Bengal, July 1777.

attendance. On being introduced, he expressed his readiness to give the Directors every satisfaction on the point, but as the subject was mixed up with others of a nature extremely confidential, he was prepared to submit the same to the inspection of any three members of the Court, and then withdrew. 1776-78. BENGAL.

The Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, and Richard Becher, Esq., were empowered to make such inspection. On the 23d October, they reported to the Court, that having conferred with Mr. Macleane on the subject of his letter presented to the Court on the 11th, they found that, from the purport of Mr. Hastings' instructions, contained in a paper in his own hand-writing, given to Mr. Macleane, and produced by him to them, "Mr. Hastings declares he will not continue in the government of Bengal, unless certain conditions therein specified can be obtained," of which they see no probability: and Mr. George Vansittart has declared to them, that he was present when these instructions were given to Mr. Macleane, and when Mr. Hastings empowered Mr. Macleane to declare his resignation to the Court. Mr. Stewart likewise confirmed to them, that Mr. Hastings declared to him, that he had given directions to the above purpose by Mr. Macleane.

The Court conceiving that Mr. Macleane was acting upon full authority, unanimously resolved to accept the proposed resignation.

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Mr. Wheler was appointed to succeed to the office in the Council, which would become vacant by the said resignation, subject to His Majesty's approval.

A memorial from the Court of Directors to his Majesty, praying that effect might be given to the foregoing measures, was approved by the Company's counsel, and transmitted to Lord Weymouth, for the purpose of being laid before the King; which memorial, after being amended agreeably to a suggestion made by his Lordship, was presented to his Majesty, who was graciously pleased to approve of Mr. Wheler's appointment. A commission of government was accordingly prepared, declaring that, on the resignation of Mr. Hastings, General Clavering would succeed as Governor-general under the Act, and that Mr. Wheler would succeed as councillor under the foregoing appointment.

1777. Proceedings thereon at Calcutta.

The first official proceeding which appears to have taken place in Bengal, on the measures at home, occurred on the 20th June, when Mr. Barwell, as he was proceeding to the council chamber, received a note signed "J. P. Auriol, Secretary," requesting him to meet in council by order of General Clavering, "Governor-general." At the same time a letter was presented to Mr. Hastings from General Clavering, requiring him to deliver up the keys of Fort William and of the Company's treasury.

Mr.

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Mr. Hastings replied that he knew of no act of resignation on his part and that it was his determination to retain the office: he then caused an injunction to be issued in writing to Colonel Morgan, the commandant of Fort William, not to obey any other orders than those from Mr. Hastings as Governor-general. A summons was issued by Mr. Hastings to Mr. Francis to meet in council, and Mr. Auriol, the secretary, received instructions to issue orders for a meeting of the Council through Mr. Hastings only. The judges were also assembled at the instance of Mr. Hastings, for the purpose of their opinion being obtained on the critical position in which the Government was placed. Mr. Barwell had ineffectually endeavoured to obtain a perusal of the letter from the Court of Directors, purporting to convey their orders as to the new Government.

Instructions were sent off to the commandants at Bankipore, Dinapore, and to Mr. Baber, the chief commissioner of the Council at Moorshedabad to obey only the orders of the Governor-general under the Act of Parliament.

The Court's instructions, with the whole of the papers, having been submitted for the opinion of the judges at Calcutta, they expressed their opinion "unanimously, clearly, and decidedly, that Mr. Hastings had not resigned. It was quite evident that he was not dead, that he was not removed, and that he had not resigned." Adverting to Colonel Macleane's

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Macleane's letter, they remarked that it was no resignation but the expression of a desire to resign, and that the appointment of Mr. Wheler was to an office which *would* become vacant and not which *had;* and that the resignation of the Governor-general was a *proposed* resignation. This, and no other, the judges observed, could be the Court's intention. In conclusion the four judges stated, "we have given the papers and the subject several hours' consideration, wishing to deliver such an opinion as from the reasoning of it, not from its authority, might claim weight sufficient to prevent the fatal consequences of a divided government, but we do assure you that none of the time has been taken up in settling a difference of opinion. There is not one point of it, from the first to the last, in which we have not entirely concurred. We transmit it in strong hopes that it may have that effect, the consideration of which could only have led us to deliver any opinion at all, and most ardently praying God that it may avert the mischiefs which seem to impend over the East-India Company and this country."

On the 21st June, a proclamation was agreed to by General Clavering as Governor-general, which was ordered to be translated into the Persian and Bengallee languages. The Persian translator felt it to be his duty to decline translating it without the order of the Governor-general.

General

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General Clavering took the following oath as Governor-general, "I swear that I will faithfully and diligently discharge the duties of Governor-general of this presidency of Fort William." In dictating the minutes of council he designated himself as Governor-general. It was also resolved that the commandants of stations should be directed to send their returns to the Governor-general, until a new commander-in-chief was appointed.

On the 22d June, the Council being assembled by Mr. Hastings, they resolved that General Clavering had actually superseded, assumed, and taken possession of the place and office of Governor-general, and of the Presidency of Fort William.

That he had relinquished, resigned, surrendered, and vacated the office of second member of council, and

That he had also relinquished, resigned, surrendered, and vacated the office of commander-in-chief.

Mr. Hastings then preferred a charge against Mr. Auriol, for having acted as secretary to the Council, without instructions from him as Govenor-general, and it was made a standing order that in future all principal secretaries should attend the Governor-general and Council when assembled, and that they should not attend officially or receive orders from any individual member of the Board.

When

1777. BENGAL. When any member should call for the proceedings, one of the deputy secretaries, or one of the clerks was to attend him. The members present at this meeting of the Council were, Mr. Hastings, Mr. Barwell, and Mr. Francis.

On the 24th June, Mr. Francis recorded a minute in which he remarked "every thing is at stake, every thing has been hazarded, I fear, by some degree of passion and a great degree of precipitation; much may be retrieved by prudence and moderation. I trust it will appear that I have given a signal example of both, not only in my immediate and implicit acquiescence in the decision of the judges, but in my present attendance here. Let me have the honour and happiness of assuming the character of mediator."

This judicious and well-timed minute, and the further opinion of the judges which had been sought on the occasion of General Clavering's assuming the office of Governor-general, and thereby vacating that of commander-in-chief, led Mr. Hastings to move in council on the 25th: "That, under the advice of the judges, the Council do recede from putting into execution all their resolutions passed since the 20th instant, and that all parties should be placed in the same situation in which they stood before the receipt of those orders. This resolution was unanimously agreed to. Thus terminated a matter which, but for the opinion of the bench and the interposition of Mr. Francis,

Francis, might have involved the settlement in anarchy and confusion. 1777-78. BENGAL.

Mr. Hastings addressed the Court of Directors on the subject, on the 15th August.

"No event of my life ever befel me for which I was so little prepared as the news of the notification made by Colonel Macleane. Your acceptance of that notification, your nomination of Mr. Wheler, your application to the King for its approval, and his Majesty's approval thereof—acts so solemn in their profession, so important in respect to their object, and concluded by an authority so sacred, that although I knew them to be invalid, the grounds on which they were built being defective, yet my confidence forsook me, and I thought of nothing but to submit myself to the hard lot which had been imposed upon me. I could not disavow the declaration made by Colonel Macleane, without appearing adverse to a man who had given me the most undoubted proofs of his friendship, and even in this instance in which he exceeded his powers, had been actuated, I knew, by a sincere and honest, though a mistaken and too precipitate zeal to serve me. I could not arraign the justice of those whose approbation I have ever sought as the first reward of my fidelity and incessant toils for their service; neither would the high respect which I bear to an instrument having his Majesty's royal signature, however obtained, allow me without the greatest reluctance to disclaim the principle on which its effects depended. On the other hand, I could not ratify the promise which had been made in my name, without making an ungrateful return to the Company for the honourable support which they had so successfully bestowed upon me, nor without branding my own character with falsehood and deception, after the repeated protestations publicly and loudly made by me, that no consideration of private convenience nor impatience

1777-78. BENGAL. patience of injury should prevail upon me, to make a voluntary surrender of the trust which had been committed to me; but that I would retain my seat in this Government until a clear decision was passed between me and my opponents in it, or until I should be removed from it by authority."

Not having been able to learn the authorities upon which so uncommon a measure had been concluded, he observed,

"I am compelled to declare, that I do not hold myself bound by the notification of Mr. Macleane, nor by any of the acts consequent of it."

In support of his decision, as one which had been governed by the sentiments he invariably expressed regarding his intention, notwithstanding the measures of his opponents, to retain his office until removed from it by competent authority, he referred to various extracts from his former letters as corroborative of such a determination: and then remarked,

"From what had passed here and in England since the constitution of the new government of Bengal, my mind had been framed to the expectation and patient endurance of any event which I thought could have befallen me; but I must own that it was unequal to the last, for surely nothing can exceed the humiliation of being deprived of a trust of the first importance perhaps under the British Empire, by an imputed act of my own, without even the formality to verify it, which would have been required for the acceptance of a common note of exchange.*"

Throughout

* Bengal Revenue Consultations, June 1777.

Throughout the whole of this extraordinary proceeding, the Court of Directors appear to have been governed by a simple desire to give effect to what they believed to be the express wish of Mr. Hastings. They justly deemed it a matter of such very great importance that they thought fit to obtain all the proof they could of Mr. Macleane's authority. They were satisfied with the proof adduced in support of it; and, in order to avoid all error in framing the commission under which they for the first time exercised the power of appointing a new councillor subject to the approval of the Crown, they submitted the instrument for the opinion of counsel under whose sanction it was issued, never, however, for a moment contemplating that the subject would become matter for judicial decision in India. This circumstance presented another instance of the inexpediency of acting in matters of grave importance, affecting both the interest of individuals and the welfare of the Government, upon mere private authority, however apparently sanctioned. The Court publicly animadverted upon a course which had led them, as well as Mr. Hastings' agents, into a most erroneous conception of his meaning, and they expressed their decided opinion that Mr. Macleane had been invested with full powers by Mr. Hastings, who, it was clear, had evidently specified some distinct propositions requiring something to be done or performed as the *condition of the Governor-*

1777-78. BENGAL.

1777-78. BENGAL. *Governor-general being confirmed in the Government.* The Court remarked that Mr. Hastings was at that time, and had been for many years in full possession of the Government, and he had also been actually recently confirmed therein by a most solemn Act of Parliament, which Act was full and complete, and stood in no need of confirmation, of which he must have been aware when he gave instructions to his agents.*

General Sir John Clavering, after an illness of fourteen days, expired on the 30th of August, and was succeeded in the temporary command of the army by General Stibbert. The Court of Directors, before official accounts reached them of the event, addressed the Supreme Government, stating that, to their inexpressible concern, they had received undoubted intelligence of the death of Sir John Clavering. They passed a warm eulogium on his public conduct, which they felt had entitled him to their highest esteem and confidence, and they considered his death a great public loss to the East-India Company and to his country.†

Lieutenant-general Sir Eyre Coote was nominated to the Bengal Council, and commander-in-chief of all the Company's forces in India.

The decease of Colonel Monson and General Clavering, both of whom had been instrumental in promoting the treaty concluded by Colonel Upton,

* Letter to Bengal, December 1778.

† Letter to Bengal, May 1778.

Upton, left the majority of the Supreme Council and the presidency of Bombay agreed as to the course to be followed with regard to the Mahrattas. 1777-78. BENGAL.

The Supreme Government resolved, that the Bombay presidency were warranted by the treaty of Porrunder in supporting Ragobah; that the British government were also entitled to any further advantages that might be obtained by negotiation, as a compensation for the hazard and expense incurred by their interposition and assistance. The Court of Directors, in a despatch to Bengal of the 5th February 1777, expressed their concern that the cession of Bassein by Ragobah had not been effected. The defeat of Hurry Punt the Mahratta by Hyder, and the intestine broils at Poonah, determined the Council at Calcutta to despatch a force under Colonel Leslie, overland, from Bengal to Bombay. It commenced its march from Calpee on the 4th May 1778. Captain Munro, with a detachment of the force, was cut off by some ravaging horse a short distance from that place.

The progress of the force was so slow, and Colonel Leslie manifested such want of judgment in forming an unauthorized treaty with some native chiefs on the route, that the Government appointed Colonel Goddard to take charge of it. He was also authorized to supply the place of Mr. Elliott, a civilian, who died as he was proceeding on a mission to Berar, in order to effect a treaty with the rajah of that province, in furtherance of the

1777-78. BENGAL.

the policy determined upon, to enable him to enforce his claims to the throne of the Ram Rajah; and also by establishing himself in the Mahratta empire, to give him effectual support against the Nizam.

In November 1778, the Bombay Council sent forward Captain Stuart with a detachment of grenadier sepoys to take possession of the Boru Ghaut, a pass through the mountains of much importance as opening the way to Poonah, which was within fifty miles of it. The object was effected, and the pass fortified.

The remainder of the forces left Bombay on the 23d November. They took possession of the fort of Billapore, which guarded the entrance of Panwell river, where they were joined by Colonel Egerton, who assumed the chief command of the army, consisting of 100 European artillery, 539 European infantry, and 2,689 sepoys, together with 600 artillery lascars. The forces arrived at Panwell on the 25th, and on the 13th December reached Campoly, at the foot of the ghaut, where Messrs. Mostyn and Carnac joined Colonel Egerton, with whom they formed a committee for the general conduct of the expedition.

On the 1st January they marched from Condal, a village immediately beyond the pass. On the route they were harassed by the enemy, who appeared with a body of 10,000 horse. Lieutenant-colonel Cay was mortally wounded by a rocket.

On

On the 4th, the army advanced towards Poonah, where they suffered a great loss in the death of Captain Stuart. 1777-78. BENGAL.

Colonel Egerton shortly afterwards relinquished the command from ill-health, and was succeeded by Lieutenant-colonel Cockburn. On the 9th they reached Corrygaum, a considerable town about sixteen miles from Poonah, but which had been previously burnt and abandoned. Instead of finding supporters of the pretensions of Ragobah, it was discovered that the enemy were in great force under the orders of the Poonah ministers. It was accordingly determined to fall back, as far as might be requisite to secure supplies and to preserve a communication with the Concan, or the country below the Ghauts. They were attacked in the retreat on the morning of the 11th before daylight, by the enemy, who had received intelligence of their intended movement. The attack was continued until four o'clock in the afternoon, when the army effected its retreat to Worgaum.

On the 14th, Messrs. Holmes and Farmer were despatched to the Mahratta camp to propose terms of accommodation. Nothing short of the surrender of Ragobah could induce the enemy to enter upon the consideration of terms. Ragobah desired, in the hope of effecting an arrangement, to proceed to the Mahrattas. Madajee Scindiah also declared that a new treaty must be entered into, as that concluded by Colonel Upton had been completely

1777-78. BENGAL. completely broken. A convention was signed at Worgaum,* by which Ragobah was to be given up, and Salsette and the other conquered countries restored to the Mahrattas; Messrs. Farmer and Stuart remaining as hostages until the treaty was confirmed by the Bombay Government. They refused to ratify it: and in this refusal they were supported by the Supreme Government.

Moodajee Bhonsla, the rajah of Berar, although aware of the object entertained by the Supreme Government in supporting his pretensions to the throne of the Ram Rajah, used every exertion to produce a friendly understanding between the courts of Poonah and Calcutta, and effected the dismissal of some French officers of note from the former city. At the same time he expostulated with the Governor-general against the expedition of Colonel Goddard, and pointed out the danger to which the detachment would necessarily be exposed in passing through the Mahratta states. His representation was ineffectual. Colonel Goddard was sent forward, and though made acquainted on his route with the convention of Worgaum, by which he was to return to Calcutta, he proceeded on his march, and reached Surat in February 1779, with full powers to treat with the Mahrattas for the restoration of peace on that side of India, but with strict injunctions against admitting the French, or giving up any of the conquests

* *Vide* Printed Treaties, page 552.

conquests or accessions. Colonel Goddard had been advanced to the rank of brigadier-general. 1778-79. BENGAL.

Before entering upon his mission, a circumstance unexpectedly occurred which it was conjectured might lead to very important results. Ragobah, since his separation from the English forces at Telligaum, had remained under charge of Madajée Scindiah, who, though desirous of retaining possession of his person with a view to political advantages, treated him with every mark of respect, and even left his artillery and most of the forces he had brought with him from Bombay, to accompany him on the march to the place destined for his reception, Scindiah's dewan, with 4,000 horse, being appointed to escort him. They reached the Nerbuddah: when, preparing to cross that river, Ragobah attempted to make his escape. An action ensued between his forces and those of the Dewan: the latter was mortally wounded, and his troops totally routed. Ragobah immediately proceeded towards Broach with 4,000 horse and twenty guns, and joined General Goddard's camp on the 13th June 1779.

The Supreme Government, anticipating the probability of the Poonah durbar protracting the negotiation with General Goddard, desired him to demand, within twenty-four hours, a definitive answer to the propositions then under discussion; and to intimate that refusal or delay would be construed into a declaration of war. The vakeel

1780. BENGAL. from Poonah declared that no peace would be made unless Salsette was relinquished and Ragobah delivered up: hostilities were accordingly determined upon.* ·

At the instance of the Bombay Council, Goddard concluded a treaty with Futty Sing Guicowar, on the 26th January 1780, who ceded to the Company a portion of Guzerat, south of the Tappey, known by the name of Attaveezy, with their share of the revenues of Surat,† and engaged to supply 3,000 horse; in return for which he was to have Ahmedabad and other possessions, from which the government of Poonah was to be entirely excluded. Goddard besieged and took Ahmedabad, the capital of Guzerat, by storm on the 15th February 1780, and on the 28th, in pursuance of the treaty, Futty Sing was put in possession of the city and country of Ahmedabad. After concluding this arrangement, Goddard proposed moving with all expedition to meet the combined army, which had between twenty and thirty thousand horse. For this purpose he sent off his heavy artillery and stores to Surat. He left Ahmedabad on the 2d March, and moved with such rapidity, that on the 8th he arrived within two miles of Baroda and sixteen of the camp of Scindia and Holkar, which he intended to have attacked that night had not overtures been made by Scindia through Messrs. Farmer

* Letter from Bengal, 14th January 1780.

† *Vide* Printed Treaties, page 555.

1780. BENGAL.

mer and Stuart, the hostages, who had been released from the Mahratta camp to treat with the English. The aggrandizement of Scindia and the possession of Ragobah appearing to be the objects, the overtures were rejected, and on the 3d April the Mahratta force was completely defeated by Goddard. Subsequent engagements took place with various English detachments, in which the Mahrattas were repulsed and dispersed. The most important was the surrender of Bassein to the forces under Goddard, on the 20th December, after which the English army went into quarters for the rainy season. During these operations the supplies remitted from Bengal to Madras and Bombay amounted to nearly a crore of rupees.

Salt monopoly resumed.

In order to improve the financial resources of the Government, Mr. Hastings proposed that the salt monopoly should be resumed in behalf of the Company. This article was supplied to the inhabitants from what was obtained from the earth impregnated with sea-salt at the mouth of the Ganges, betwen Balasore and Chittagong. The inland trade in salt had been vested in an exclusive company for the benefit of the European servants, but discontinued by the Court's orders of 1766. Restrictions had been introduced to secure the interests of the natives. The trade was thrown open, but regulations were framed to preserve the public

* Letter from Bengal, 6th January 1781.

1778 79. BENGAL.

public against the monopoly of opulent natives combining to oppress the manufacturers. In 1772, the salt in every part of the province was placed on the same footing: it was to be manufactured for the Company, and the manufactories in each district were let for five years. A certain quantity was to be delivered to the Company at a given price, to be dealt out to the native conductors of the inland trade, who had made advances to aid the farmers in the payment of their labourers employed in the manufacture. In 1777, the practice of farming was continued, but the produce was left to the farmer's disposal. As the amount of revenue was not equal to what a more judicious management would yield, a new system was suggested by Mr. Hastings,* under which all the salt was to be manufactured for the Company, and sold for ready money at moderate fixed rates, to be ascertained and published at the beginning of every season by the Governor-general in council. The suggestion of Mr. Hastings was strongly opposed by the Council, but the result more than justified the Governor-general's anticipations. The first three years yielded a net revenue of £464,000, and the three years before the government of Lord Cornwallis, of £522,450.

Parties of the Seiks, having crossed the Ganges, entered Rohilcund and commenced depredations; but

* Consultations, September, October, and November 1780. Letter from Bengal, November 1782.

but were soon repulsed by the temporary brigade, a portion of which was detached to the Ghauts for the purpose. Fyzula Cawn at this time offered to raise and maintain a force in aid of the Company during the war with France, and without hesitation immediately formed a body of five hundred men. 1778-79. BENGAL.

The Rana of Gohud, then described as "a chief south of Agra," made overtures for effecting a treaty with the Company to secure himself against the Mahrattas. The terms were agreed to and signed on the 2d December. The Company were to furnish a force for the defence of his country on paying 20,000 Muchildar rupees for each battalion of sepoys; nine-sixteenths of any acquisitions were to go to the Company. The Rana was to furnish 10,000 horse, whose combined operations might be determined on against the Mahrattas. Whenever peace took place between the Company and the Mahrattas, the Rana was to be included, and his present possessions, with the fort of Gwalior, were to be guaranteed to him.* Treaty with Rana of Gohud.

The state of the national interests at home had at all times a material influence on those of the Company; who derived temporary pecuniary aid at particular junctures by advances under votes of Parliament, which advances were invariably repaid to the country. It was not, however, so much from the want of money, as in the supply of physical force, Difficulties of the Company increased by state of affairs at home.

* Treaty, 2d December 1779.

1778-79. BENGAL. force that they experienced the greatest difficulty. Their commerce suffered from the inadequacy of naval protection, and their European arm was essentially crippled in India, from the impossibility of procuring a sufficient number of recruits.

Never were these effects more seriously felt than in the years 1778-9. Great Britain had to contend with her revolted colonies; the attempt to detach France from America failed, and British ships were seized in French ports without the country possessing the means of retaliation. The inefficient force placed at the command of Admiral Keppel constrained him to return to port in the face of the enemy, and ultimately led to his trial and highly honourable acquittal by a court-martial at Portsmouth, followed by the thanks of Parliament; where a motion was made to remove Earl Sandwich from the head of the Admiralty. The effect of such a state of things could not fail to reach India. It was severely felt from the superiority of the French fleet in that quarter. The Government of Bengal devised all possible means to add to the force under Admiral Sir Edward Vernon. The Company's ship *Resolution* was equipped as a vessel of war, and mounted with forty guns; the ship *Charlotte* was purchased by the Council, and fitted in the same manner; and a marine was prepared for the defence of the river, consisting of one forty-gun

gun frigate, three cruizers, and some pilot vessels. 1778-79. BENGAL.

The secret committee of the Court of Directors forwarded intelligence overland, *viâ* Cairo, of the declaration of war in London on the 18th March, and at Paris on the 30th. They also issued orders to the Supreme Council to take immediate measures for the reduction of Pondicherry.* A negotiation was also to be opened with Hyder, who had evinced a disposition to enter into an alliance with the Company; and such was the critical situation of national affairs, and so strong was the apprehension of an invasion from the inveterate enemies of the realm, that the energies of the country were called forth in every quarter, and the very existence of the constitution was considered to depend upon the maintenance of its naval superiority against the combined forces of France and Spain.

Company's aid to public.

The East-India Company, at this juncture, passed a resolution in General Court, to give three guineas each to the first 2,000 able-bodied seamen; two guineas to each of the 2,000 ordinary seamen;

* In April 1779, the General Court of Proprietors voted unanimous thanks to the Secret Committee, for the spirited orders they issued for operations against Pondicherry and the French, and presented them with five hundred and three hundred guineas for the purchase of plate. Thanks were also voted to Sir Hector Munro and Admiral Sir Edward Vernon, to each of whom a sword set with diamonds was presented, valued at 750 guineas.

1778-79. BENGAL.

seamen; and one-and-a-half to each 2,000 able-bodied landsmen who should voluntarily enter to serve on board his Majesty's fleet, over and above all other bounties. They further resolved to build, with all possible despatch, three ships of war of seventy-four guns each, with masts and yards, to be delivered to such officer as his Majesty should appoint to receive them. This is one of the numerous instances in which the Company's extended means enabled them to come forward, and effectually aid the national resources in periods of great difficulty.

Incursions of the Muggs.

Some of the districts on the frontiers between Chittagong and Luckypore, as well as the island of Sundeep, had been infested with a set of people called *Muggs*, who inhabited the kingdom of Arracan. They supported themselves by plundering their neighbours, and seizing and carrying off the ryots who fell in their way. Their appearance cast a dread into the inhabitants, and produced the desertion of many families.

Efforts were made to repress them by means of the troops at Dacca and Chittagong, with the assistance of armed boats from Dacca, and a cruizer on the coast of Arracan. The government also proposed a plan for making reprisals on the country of the Muggs, in the hope that, at all events, it would deter them for a time from repeating their invasion.

The

1778-79.
BENGAL.
Nabob of Bengal.

The Nabob of Bengal, Mobarek-ul-Dowla, was at this time admitted to the full control and management of his own affairs. They had hitherto been conducted by Mahomed Reza Cawn.

Mr. Hastings, in the midst of his other varied and important avocations, did not lose sight of the interests of science and literature.

A copy of the Mahomedan laws had been translated by Mr. Anderson, under the sanction and patronage of the Government, and sent home to the Court, together with the Bengal Grammar, prepared by Messrs. Halhed and Wilkins, five hundred copies being taken by the Government at thirty rupees a copy, as an encouragement to their labours. Mr. Wilkins * was also supported in erecting and working a press for the purpose of printing official papers, &c.

The Madrissa or Mahomedan college, for the education of the natives, was established by the Government. In order to open a communication by the Red Sea with Europe, the Government built a vessel at Mocha, having been assured that every endeavour would be made to secure the privilege of despatches, with the Company's seal, being forwarded with facility; the trade with Suez having been prohibited to all British subjects, on a complaint to the King's ministers by the Ottoman Porte.

That

* The late Sir Charles Wilkins, the much respected librarian to the Court of Directors.

1778-79. BENGAL.

That distinguished servant of the Company, Major Rennell, was at this time brought to the special notice of the Court of Directors. His well known abilities, in promoting the success of navigation, had secured great advantage to the public interests. His employment as surveyor-general had too much exposed him to the effects of the climate, and as the dangerous wounds which he had received in the course of surveys from the Synassies obliged him to quit India, the Government recommended him in the strongest manner to the favourable consideration of the Court. His Memoir of Bengal, with his Atlas of that country, his Geography of Herodotus, and his Retreat of the Ten Thousand, formed part of his valuable labours. After his return to England, he filled an appointment in immediate connexion with the Court of Directors, until his death, which took place at a very advanced age.

Mandarins from Cochin China.

Two mandarins of rank having been driven through stress of weather, from the coast of Cochin China, attended by a Portuguese missionary, reached Calcutta. They were treated with every mark of attention by the Government, and provided with attendants and residence. The Government availed themselves of the opportunity, to attempt opening a commercial intercourse with Cochin China. They ordered the Amazon, snow, to be in readiness to convey back the mandarins, with whom they determined to send Mr. Chapman, of

of the civil service, with a letter to the prince of the country, and authorized him to avail himself of any opening for securing a treaty of commerce.* 1778-79. BENGAL.

* Letter from Bengal, April 1778.

1779-80.

CHAPTER XI.

THE affairs of the Company at this time engaged much of the attention of parliament. In 1779, an Act had been passed, declaring that the £1,400,000, borrowed of the public, had been repaid by the Company, and that as their bond debt was reduced to £1,500,000, they were authorized to declare a dividend of 8 per cent. The territorial acquisitions and revenues, were also to remain with them for another year, and the persons, who, at the passing of the Act, were in the offices of Governor-general and Councillors, in Bengal, were to hold the same during its continuance. In the following session, Lord North acquainted the House, that the Company had not made such proposals for a renewal of their Charter as were deemed satisfactory, and he therefore moved, that the Speaker should give the three years' notice required by the Act, previously to the cessation of their exclusive privileges of trade. Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke strongly opposed the minister, and asked whether he was not content with having lost America? Whether he could point out a single benefit which his motion was capable of producing, and whether he desired to behold

behold those scenes of anarchy, confusion, distress and ruin, which his idle and impotent threat might produce in the Company's possessions and affairs in India. Mr. Fox enquired of the minister how he was to secure and bring home the revenue, but through the Company, and whether his present proposition manifested that gratitude to the East-India Company, to whom his country was so highly indebted. He imputed the bad understanding between the Company and the noble lord, to his having attempted to possess himself of the *patronage of the Company*. This latter remark called up Lord North, who denied having had any intention to secure the patronage, "It was an assertion wholly unmerited, and not founded in fact."* 1779-80.

In order to give further time for deliberation, an Act was passed continuing the same privileges to the Company as in the preceding year, to be computed as commencing from the 5th April 1780.†

BENGAL.

Whilst these measures were in progress at home, the Company's affairs in India were daily increasing in interest, and called for the exercise of proportional judgment on the part of those who were entrusted with their management. Some detachments of troops having arrived at Fort St. George, on their way to Calcutta, the necessities

* Parliamentary History, 1780, vol. xxi. † 20 Geo. III, cap. 56.

1779-80. BENGAL and MADRAS.

sities of the Madras Presidency were such, as to induce them to retain a portion of the men. The Supreme Government complained in the strongest manner, against what they termed such unwarrantable conduct on the part of the Subordinate Presidency. They dwelt upon the offensive mode in which they had, without the slightest previous intimation, been deprived of those military means, so essential to enable them to fulfil their various engagements. The embarrassment occasioned by this proceeding, added to the drain which had been made upon their finances in supplying the wants both of Madras and Bombay, was aggravated by the conduct of the Supreme Court at Calcutta.

Complaint against conduct of Supreme Court.

The Council became involved in serious discussions with the Bench, who desired to have their power acknowledged as co-extensive with that of the Government. A process of contempt had been issued against the Naib Nazim, the chief native magistrate of criminal jurisdiction of the Provinces.* It was clear that there was a wide and essential difference between the nature of pleas to the jurisdiction of the courts of law in England, and of the court established in India: the design of the former being to mark the lines of separation between the different courts administering the same law to the same people, and of the latter, to release from the jurisdiction of the Supreme

* December 1779.

1779-80. BENGAL.

Supreme Court, persons over whom it had no legal right of jurisdiction, who were strangers to the law which it administered, and were defined by the Act under which it was constituted, to be a different people, and aliens from the government of England.

A process had been issued against the Rajah of Cossijurah, which would have required bail to the extent of £30,000, or, in default of such bail, imprisonment for twelve months. To parties unacquainted with the country, and with the character of its inhabitants, it was impossible to form an adequate conception of the probable effects of such a proceeding. Amongst the stubborn and almost immutable usages of a people whom it was attempted to drag within the pale of our laws, there were not any so intimately blended with their natures, so interwoven with their very existence, or so likely to drive them to desperation, as those which respected their women. And yet it was attempted to direct a mandatory process of the Court to a woman of the highest caste and rank—the Ranee of Rajeshye, who possessed in her own right the first great zemindarry in the provinces. Secluded as women of her superior rank are—equally ignorant of the language, and of the purpose of the process, it would certainly have been disobeyed. A capias would have followed, the execution would have been committed to a band of armed ruffians, her house pillaged, her temple polluted, the most secret recesses of her family violated

1779-80. BENGAL. violated, and that sanctity of character trampled upon, which throughout the East, even in times of the fiercest hostility, the most barbarous nations revere in women. This extraordinary state of things was caused by the hasty introduction of a judicial system, ill adapted to the country, and wholly unfitted to secure the objects contemplated by those who originated the measure.

Petitions were presented to Parliament from the Company, from the Supreme Government, and from the British inhabitants in Bengal, setting forth the injurious results, and representing that unless relief were given, "the Company would have ports without trade, possessions without revenue, and provinces and laws without inhabitants."

Madras. The CARNATIC, which had already suffered so dreadfully from the irruptions of Hyder, was again to become the scene of severe struggles, for the maintenance of the Company's very existence.

Sir Thomas Rumbold had intimated to the Directors his intention to relinquish the government of Madras, on account of his health, in January 1780. Mr. Whitehill being the senior Councillor, succeeded to the chair. This gentleman had been a party with his predecessor, in abolishing the Commission of Circuit, which had been established under orders from home, thereby imposing upon the Rajahs and Zemindars, the

1779-81. BENGAL.

the trouble, expense, and delay of resorting to Madras, for the settlement of points in dispute, that would have been decided by the commission on the spot. They had also entered into an agreement with Sitteram Rauze, for renting the havilly lands for a term of ten years, and had appointed him dewan of the Vizianagram district, a measure which the Directors considered to inflict a cruel and unnecessary degradation on his brother. They had likewise disposed of the Guntoor circar to the Nabob for a term of ten years. This circar had, by treaty, been delivered to the Company by Bazalet Jung, in 1779, he receiving from them a permanent rent, equal to what his aumils had paid to him.

Dismissal of Sir Thomas Rumbold and others.

These proceedings were diametrically opposed to the orders of the Directors. The motives and principles by which the parties had been governed in their adoption appeared so very questionable, that Sir Thomas Rumbold, Mr. Whitehill, and Mr. Perring were dismissed the Company's service;* and on the 17th of January 1781, Lord Macartney was appointed governor of Madras. His lordship, as was then customary, expressed his acknowledgment to the Court of Directors, and to the Company, in a General Court of Proprietors. On the 18th January, the Proprietors being met to consider the conduct of Mr. Paul Benfield, Mr. Burke,

* Letter to Madras, 10th January 1781.

1779-81. BENGAL. Burke, as proprietor, delivered in a paper, entitled heads of objections to be enquired into before Mr. Benfield should be allowed to return to India. Leave was ultimately granted for that purpose, by a vote of 368 to 302.

The Supreme Government were equally opposed with the Directors to the conduct of Mr. Whitehill. The Government were represented to have countenanced the treaty concluded by that gentleman with Bazalet Jung, whether to the extent alleged by the Madras Council was not apparent, but it was clear that orders had been subsequently sent from Bengal for relinquishing the circar. The Madras government were accused of pertinaciously refusing to obey such orders, and of retaining the circar in defiance of the peremptory instructions from Calcutta. On a previous occasion, in a matter connected with the Nizam, the Council at Fort St. George disputed the controlling power attempted to be exercised by the Supreme Government, and had expressed an opinion that the latter possessed only a negative power, and that confined to two points, *viz.* orders for declaring war, or for making treaties, and not a positive and compelling power, extending to all political affairs.

Hostile views of Hyder.

Considerable jealousy had been created in the minds of Hyder and the Nizam by the treaty; both Bazalet Jung and Hyder manifested decided intentions of hostility.

The

1779. BENGAL.

The Nabob, notwithstanding this demonstration, was wholly inert and indifferent to the preparation of any force to co-operate with that of the Company in the defence of his country. The Madras army, although consisting of thirty thousand effective men, was broken and dispersed in various detached services; some had been sent to join General Goddard; others to the garrisons on the Malabar coast; and a valuable detachment was in the Guntoor circar, under Colonel Baillie. Hyder had for some months been assembling a large army on the frontiers. Aware of the dissensions in the Council of Madras, and still alive to the indisposition manifested by the English to assist him against the Mahrattas under the treaty of 1769, he determined to resent their conduct.* He accordingly commenced operations in the month of July 1780, bursting like a torrent into the Carnatic, accompanied by the French officers and troops whom he had obtained from the Nizam. Terror and consternation prevailed at the Presidency. The danger became immediate. Sir Hector Munro proceeded to take the command of the army at the Mount, and an express was sent to Colonel Baillie, then in the Guntoor circar, to march towards the Presidency, at the same time directing him to take such a course as might afford him an opportunity of cutting off some of the enemy's convoys.

Conjeveram was ultimately fixed upon as the spot

* *Vide* page 250.

1779. BENGAL.

spot of rendezvous; thither Sir Hector Munro, with the army, amounting altogether only to 6,000 troops, marched from the Mount.

Hyder, who was before Arcot, raised the siege, and managed to throw his army across the course which he supposed Colonel Baillie would take to join the main body: by other movements evincing great dexterity, he induced Sir Hector Munro to alter his position, whilst at the same time he determined to make a decided attack on Colonel Baillie's detachment; for which purpose Tippoo Saib, Hyder's son, was sent with a large force, consisting of 6,000 infantry, 18,000 cavalry, and twelve pieces of cannon. A severe conflict took place at Peerambaucum, Tippoo being completely repulsed. In consequence of a communication from Colonel Baillie after he had defeated Tippoo, a force under Colonel Fletcher was sent to his relief. Its progress, though conducted in the night and with great secrecy, was attempted to be intercepted by Hyder, who had exact information, through spies, of what was passing; Colonel Fletcher changed his route, and effected a junction with Colonel Baillie: this point, coupled with the defeat of Tippoo, spread dismay through the Mysore army. After much discussion, and in opposition to M. Lally, Hyder planned an ambuscade through the route Colonel Baillie was to pass, enfilading the road with batteries of cannon. The commander and men evinced heroic courage, sustaining

Colonel Baillie defeated.

taining the contest against an overwhelming force, until they were literally borne down and trampled upon by the horse and elephants; Colonel Baillie himself being severely wounded, and two hundred Europeans made prisoners. Sir Hector Munro retreated to Chingleput. 1779-82. BENGAL.

The Governor-general at this critical moment addressed the Court in order to explain his conduct on the occasion of pecuniary aid which had been given to the Rajah of Berar, "as well as to avoid all appearance of ostentation on his own part." Mr. Hastings as to pecuniary aid.

He represented that "an unusual tender had been made to him on the 26th June 1780, of means to supply the detachment under Major Carnac, on the invasion of the Mahratta dominions beyond Gohud. The money was not his own; he had, in fact, no means nor any right to the sum in question, nor would have received it but for the occasion which prompted him to avail himself of the accidental means at that instant offered to him; it was converted to the use of the Company: a renewed occasion had now arrived on which he had given further aid to the Rajah of Berar to the extent of three lacs, two on his own account, and one on account of the Company. The extreme state of pecuniary distress to which the Government were reduced, led him to express his apprehensions of the necessity of stopping the provision of an investment in the season 1780. If the measure should be adopted it would be the result of unavoidable necessity, in which no option could be left but the sacrifice of the Company's profits, or the hazarding for ever the existence of the Company's possessions for the purpose of retaining those profits. It was impossible to provide for the vast expense required for the subsistence and defence of the other Presidencies, and for an investment, in addition to the increasing exigencies of for

1779-82. BENGAL. Bengal, and all to be raised from its own unassisted resources. They had already been obliged to borrow fifty lacs at interest: but such resource would soon cease, whilst the exigency would remain the same. Exclusive of foreign calls, their wants had increased, and would still further increase, notwithstanding all the care and economy applied to check them, as the places of the troops whom they had been constrained to send into the Carnatic, must be supplied for service in Bengal. This exertion was demanded for the preservation of Madras. The whole necessity appearing, by the extorted and palliated confession of the Nizam, to have been occasioned by his having instigated the confederacy in consequence of the conduct of the Madras government towards him."

After this statement regarding the finances, Mr. Hastings referred to a measure he had devised for drawing off Madajée Scindia from the Mahrattas, and for extending the Company's dominion, which plan he was constrained to abandon in consequence of the dreadful calamity that had befallen the Madras arms, and to change his object to one of preservation.*

The Supreme Council, in support of their controlling authority, and to evince the same to the native powers, especially to the Nizam, who had been impressed with a belief that they did not possess such control, passed a resolution by which Mr. Whitehill† was removed from the chair at Fort St. George, together with Mr. Sadlier, a

* Letter to Court, December 1780.

† Mr. Whitehill would have been removed by the orders of the Directors, *vide* page 577.

1780-82.
BENGAL and MADRAS

Sir Eyre Coote proceeds from Bengal to Madras.

a member of the council. These orders were entrusted to Lieutenant-general Sir Eyre Coote, who had been requested by the Bengal government, in consequence of the unfortunate state of affairs on the coast, to proceed thither and assume the chief command of the army, and the direction of the military operations. The General was accompanied by a force consisting of eight battalions of sepoys for the defence of the Northern Circars; a supply of specie was likewise sent with him, amounting to fifteen lacs, and a considerable quantity of grain. Mr. Smith, the senior civil councillor, took the chair on the removal of Mr. Whitehill. The Guntoor circar was now restored to Bazalet Jung. Mr. John Holland, who had been suspended from the post of Resident with the Nizam by the late Madras government, was re-appointed to it by the Bengal government in the character of their agent to his highness.

The siege of Arcot was renewed by Hyder, and capitulated to him on the 3d November 1780. Preparations were made for the march of the troops under Sir Eyre Coote immediately the rains could admit of their moving. The general's conduct in the preparatory measures which he adopted, justified the unlimited confidence reposed in his skill and judgment. The task committed to him was most arduous; not only the fate of the British interests in the Carnatic, but the very safety of Madras, rested upon the judicious

1781-82. BENGAL.

dicious application of the comparatively trifling means which he possessed—not 10,000 men, of whom 1,700 only were Europeans, opposed to an enemy's army of between 90,000 and 100,000.

It was first determined to attempt the relief of Vellore, Wandewash, Permacoil, and Chingleput. Sir Eyre Coote marched from the Mount on the 17th January at the head of the army to Wandewash. Hyder, on learning his approach, raised the siege of that place. The admirable energy of the general obliged him as rapidly to abandon Permacoil and Vellore.

The siege of Trichinopoly being meditated by Hyder, Sir Eyre Coote marched to Porto Novo, the wants of the army being supplied with stores from the fleet under Sir Edward Hughes, who had already rendered most effectual service by destroying Hyder's shipping on the coast of Malabar.

Proceedings in Parliament as to the conduct of the Supreme Court.

The petitions which had been presented to Parliament,* complaining of the conduct of the Supreme Court at Calcutta, were referred to a Select Committee of the House, appointed on the 12th January 1781, to enquire into the allegations. On the 27th April the attention of the House being drawn to the progress of the war in the Carnatic, Mr. Burke stated, that he had for a long time been engaged in examining and searching into the affairs of India; he knew from experience, that they were at once too extended and

* *Vide* page 576.

and too complicated, and that the views and passions and interests of too many different men, were connected and blended with them, to be easily developed or tolerably understood on a sudden. A motion was submitted by Lord North for the appointment of a *Secret* committee to enquire into the causes of the war. Mr. Burke desired that it might be an open committee, and observed, Let me fight with Jupiter, as said Ajax, "but give me the day-light." A Secret Committee was nominated and authorized to meet in the India House, and to adjourn from time to time and place to place. 1781-82. BENGAL.

On the 9th May, Lord North having stated that no agreement had yet been made with the Company as to their charter, Mr. Burke with great asperity deprecated the delay, and observed they might be called upon to decide to whom the acquisitions and revenues belonged, and they had not a document before them to proceed upon. Lord North remarked, that the Company had demanded the full enjoyment of their chartered rights, by which he did not know exactly what was meant. It might mean only the exclusive trade for the term of the charter; but if it meant the exclusive right of superintending all their concerns, free from all control, then he contended against it. It was the duty of Parliament never to renounce that power. He again deprecated war in the Carnatic as a great national calamity, and adverted

1781-82. BENGAL. adverted to a system of peculation which he believed to have prevailed in India to a great extent.

At length the two Acts were passed: the one concluding an agreement between the public and the Company;* the other to redress and prevent the recurrence of the complaints against the Supreme Court at Calcutta.†

By the first-mentioned Act the Company's exclusive privileges were continued till 1791, with three years' notice; during which time the territorial acquisitions and revenues were to remain in their possession.

After a dividend of eight per cent. on the capital of £3,200,000, three-fourths of the surplus profits were to go to the public, and one-fourth to the Company.

Accounts of the state of the Company's affairs were to be laid before the Lords of the Treasury and the General Court.

During the war with France, Spain, and Holland, the Company were to pay one-fourth of the expense of his Majesty's ships in India.

After peace, the Company were to bear the whole.

The Company were allowed to recruit, and to have 2,000 men at one time ready for embarkation during war, but only 1,000 in peace.

The parties filling the offices of Governor-general, Commander-in-chief, and members of council, were to be removeable only by the King on representation of the Directors, who might appoint to vacancies on the approbation of the Crown. The Commander-in-chief, if appointed by the Directors a member of council, was to take rank as two members, but was not to succeed to the Government unless specially appointed.

British

* 21 Geo. III. cap. 65. † 21 Geo. III. cap. 70.

British subjects were not to reside more than ten miles from the Presidency, without license from the Government. 1781-82. BENGAL.

Two important provisions were also inserted. In addition to the enactment of 1773 which required the Directors to send to his Majesty's Government copies of all letters *from* India relating to the political, military, or revenue affairs of the Company, a provision was now inserted that copies of all letters proposed to be sent by the Directors *to* India relating to the said subjects, should first be submitted for his Majesty's approval, and if no disapprobation was expressed within fourteen days to the proposed despatch, the same might be forwarded to India.

The other was a clause suggested by the heavy drafts which had, at a former period, been drawn from India, and nearly ruined the Company, being, the minister remarked, "the private fortunes of Asiatic plunderers," who would again seize upon the opportunity of doing so with avidity. Lord North, in alluding to the acceptance of presents, observed, that it would be proper to interdict their receipt entirely, for which purpose it would be well to form a court of judicature in this country for the trial of offences committed in India. This suggestion, though not acted upon at that time, was adopted at a later period.

The other Act related to the Supreme Court, and was passed to appease the minds of many persons who

1781-82. BENGAL

who had been disquieted by fears and apprehensions of further mischiefs from the extension of the powers exercised by the Bench at Calcutta.

The Governor-general and Council were not to be subject to the Supreme Court, but to a competent court in England, and if a bond was given to prosecute them, the party might compel the production of papers, and authenticated copies were to be received at Westminster.

The Supreme Court was not to have jurisdiction in matters of revenue.

No person was to be amenable to the Supreme Court on account of his being a farmer or landowner, or because he was employed by the Company.

The name of every native employed in the service of the Company, in any judicial office, was to be entered, and the death of any one so employed was to be recorded.

All native servants, stewards, or agents, employed by any British subject, were to be specified by name in a book, and under a penalty. The names of all native partners were to be likewise entered, under a penalty for omission.

The Supreme Court were to hear and determine suits between natives; the Mahomedans by the laws and usages of Mahomedans, and the Gentoos by the laws and usages of Gentoos; where there was only one party, by the laws and usages of the defendant.

The rights and authorities of fathers and masters of families were to be preserved to them within their said families; nor was any act in consequence of the law of caste to be adjudged a crime, although the same might not be held justifiable by the laws of England.

The Supreme Court might frame such process, and make such rules and orders for the execution of suits against natives of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, as would accommodate the

the same to the religion and manners of the natives. The same to be sent home for his Majesty's approval. 1781-82. BENGAL.

The Governor-general and Council might determine appeals to the extent of £5,000 in civil cases.

The Governor-general and Council were to frame regulations for the Provincial Courts.

The judicial officers in the Provincial Courts were not to be answerable to the Supreme Court for error in their decrees.

Certain natives in prison at Patna were ordered to be discharged; and

The Governor-general and Council were indemnified for opposition to the process of the Supreme Court.

Appointment of Sir Elijah Impey to the Sudder Adawlut.

Whilst the Parliament was engaged in devising means for remedying the defects of the Supreme Court, the Governor-general had attempted to reconcile the differences with the Judges, by proposing to Sir Elijah Impey, the office of judge of the Sudder Dewanny Adawlut, with a salary of £6,000 a year. Mr. Hastings believed that it would be the means of lessening the distance between the Government and the Supreme Court, and would also prove an instrument of reconciliation. Sir Robert Chambers, one of the puisne judges, accepted the post of president of the court of justice at Chinsara.

The provisions contained in the Acts which have been noticed were of great importance, as regarded both the Company and their native subjects. Like the legislative measures passed from time to time to perfect or repair the constitution of our own country, those which relate to India have

1781-82. BENGAL. have been called for by the events of the times. As the effect and working of the system under which such a vast empire has been acquired and governed, is progressively traced out, it will be seen that some master mind has, at the needed moment, invariably taken a leading part in subjects which offered little attraction to the general politician who, engaged in the affairs of Europe, or the internal concerns of his own nation, felt little disposition to dive into a mass of matter relating to a country and a corporation, in either of which the kingdom at large, or, unless under particular political circumstances, took but little interest.

At the close of the session in July 1781, his Majesty's speech contained the following passage :—

"Your deliberations on the affairs of the East-India Company have terminated in such measures as will, I trust, produce great and essential advantages to my kingdom."

MADRAS. Lord Macartney. Lord Macartney, whose appointment as Governor of Madras has been noticed,* reached that Presidency in June 1781, during the height of hostilities in the Carnatic. Having assumed charge of the Government, he proceeded to inquire into the general state of the affairs, and on the 31st July, he communicated his sentiments to the

* *Vide* page 577.

the Directors. His Lordship represented that there was not a lac in the treasury; that there was not any cavalry, an arm so important in conducting operations against such an enemy as Hyder, who could attack or refrain from operations at his pleasure, and who declined all overtures for peace. No assistance whatever could be obtained from the Nabob of the Carnatic, who pleaded some new understanding with the Supreme Government. 1781-82. MADRAS

The battle of Porto Novo had been fought on the 1st July. The position chosen by Sir Eyre Coote on that occasion evinced his usual judgment. He was ably supported by Generals Stuart and Sir Hector Munro, and the enemy were totally defeated. Hyder retreated to Arcot. Reinforcements were sent from Bengal, with which Sir Eyre Coote attacked and carried, on the 23d August, Tripassore. Hyder fell back on the spot where he had defeated Colonel Baillie, whither he was followed by the English army.

A hardly contested battle took place on the 27th, which lasted from nine in the morning until sun-set. Hyder was again completely defeated, but the English suffered severely. General Stuart lost a leg by the same shot that killed Colonel Brown; and Captain Hislop, one of General Stuart's aides-de-camp, fell close by his side. On the 28th September, Hyder sustained another defeat during Sir Eyre Coote's movement with

1781-82. MADRAS. with the army towards Vellore. The principal Polygars who were at this time in Hyder's interest, came over to the Company's army. Hyder, however, was by no means dismayed at these reverses.

BENGAL. Affairs at Benares and Cheyte Sing. During these operations on the coast, the Governor-general became involved in a serious affray at Benares, when on his journey to visit the Vizier, who had expressed a particular desire for a personal interview. Under the treaty concluded with Shuja Dowlah in August 1765, it was stipulated that Bulwunt Sing, a tributary of the Vizier, and Rajah of Benares, should be continued in that province. On Shuja Dowlah's death in 1775, a treaty was concluded by Mr. Bristow with his successor, Ausuff-ud-Dowlah, by which all the districts dependent on Rajah Cheyte Sing, the successor of Bulwunt Sing, were transferred in full sovereignty to the Company, an arrangement which had apparently given great satisfaction to Cheyte Sing and his family.

When intelligence reached India, in 1778, of the war with France, Spain, and America, the Supreme Government were constrained to devise every means to augment the financial resources of the Company, in order to meet the unavoidable increase of charge. As the Rajah's provinces derived the advantage of the Company's protection, to whom he had, in point of fact, become tributary

tributary, he was called upon to aid in the general exigency. He very reluctantly assented to a contribution of five lacs. This indisposition created an unfavourable impression on the mind of the government. 1781-82. BENGAL.

Having been again applied to for aid during the war in the Carnatic, in the prosecution of which the government of Bengal had drained their treasury in supplies to Madras, he evinced a decided disinclination to come forward; and although he promised to contribute some aid in cavalry, not one man was forthcoming. These and other circumstances arising out of the deputation of a party from the Rajah to Calcutta, determined Mr. Hastings to make known his mind to Cheyte Sing, for which purpose he proceeded to Benares on his route to meet the Vizier, where he arrived on the 14th August 1781. It was the Rajah's wish to have paid the Governor-general a visit that evening, but he desired it might be postponed until a wish to that effect was communicated to the Rajah.

Cheyte Sing arrested, and flies.

In the interim, the Governor-general caused a paper to be forwarded to Cheyte Sing, recapitulating the points upon which he felt it necessary to animadvert. The reply of the Rajah was so unsatisfactory, that orders were given to Mr. Markham, the resident, on the 15th, at ten at night, to place him in arrest the following morning: should opposition arise, he was to await the

1781-82. BENGAL. arrival of two companies of sepoys. Mr. Markham, with the troops, the following morning executed his orders. The Rajah addressed a letter to Mr. Hastings, asking "what need there was for guards? He was the Governor-general's slave." In consequence of the desire of the Rajah, Mr. Markham proceeded to visit him; previous to his arrival, large bodies of armed men had crossed the river from Ramnagur. Unfortunately, the two companies who were with the resident had taken no ammunition with them. They were suddenly attacked by the assembled body of armed men and fired upon; at this moment the Rajah made his escape, letting himself down the steep banks of the river, by turbans tied together, into a boat which was waiting for him. Those who effected his escape followed him. Of the two companies commanded by Lieutenant Stalker few remained alive, and those were severely wounded; Lieutenants Stalker, Scott, and Simes lying within a short distance of each other. The Rajah fled from Ramnagur with his zenana to Lateefgur, a strong fort ten miles from Chunar, accompanied by every member of the family who could claim any right of succession to the raj.

In this state of affairs, Mr. Hastings selected Baboo Assaum Sing, who had been dewan under Bulwunt Sing, to take charge of the revenues, in quality of Naib, until it should be legally determined to whom the revenues belonged. The Governor

Governor went to Chunar, from whence requisitions were issued for succour from all quarters. Little aid could be effectually given, as the whole of the country was in arms, the provinces of Benares, Ramnagur, and Pateeta being in a state of war. Troops ultimately arrived under Major Popham from Cawnpore; the exertions and gallantry of that officer rescued the zemindary of Benares from the power and influence of the disaffected Rajah and his adherents. His last strong fortress of Bejieghur, from which he had escaped, was reduced and brought under subjection to the Company. Baboo Narrain, a grandson of Bulwunt Sing, was proclaimed rajah in the room of Cheyte Sing. 1781-82. BENGAL.

The nomination of a resident at Benares was one of the questions upon which a difference had arisen between the majority of the Council and Mr. Hastings, before the death of General Clavering, who had expressed his opinion to the Directors on the conduct of the Governor-general in removing Mr. Fowke from Benares, and nominating two persons to supply his place, *viz.* Mr. Thomas Graham and Mr. D. Barwell, as his agents, and withdrawing Mr. Bristow from Lucknow, and nominating Mr. Middleton in his room. The Directors animadverted in strong terms upon the act of the Governor-general, who had removed Mr. Fowke on the ground that the matter upon which he had been deputed to Benares was con- Resident at Benares.

1781-82. BENGAL. cluded, and yet, within twenty days only, he appointed a resident, with an assistant, where one party had been sufficient. The Court directed the restoration of Mr. Fowke. Their orders * did not reach Calcutta until the death of General Clavering, and as Mr. Hastings considered that event might make an alteration in his position, and that the removal of Mr. Graham would be tantamount to his resignation, the matter was postponed for reference home.

Mr. Fowke, aware of the orders for his restoration, appealed to the Government to have them carried into effect; the Board informed that gentleman, that they had no reason to be dissatisfied with his public conduct. Mr. Francis having declared that Sir Eyre Coote, on succeeding General Clavering, would oppose Mr. Hastings, made a direct motion that the orders of the Court should be immediately acted upon. Sir Eyre Coote stated, that as he had been nominated by his king and country to fill a high station in so distant a part of the world, and well knowing the great difficulties he should have to encounter, from the unfortunate differences which had arisen, declared that he had determined to take no part in those differences, and that he should accordingly agree to the motion for postponing the consideration of the question to the next Council. At that meeting he declared, that had he been present when the

* 30th January 1778.

1781-82. BENGAL.

the Court's orders arrived, he should have voted for their immediate execution; but the matter was now retrospective, he should therefore leave the question to be decided on the reference already made to the home authorities; but whatever their orders might be on that reference, he should support them. The Directors expressed their astonishment at the delay that had taken place, and desired that Mr. Fowke should be appointed, which was forthwith done.* In February 1781, Mr. Fowke was recalled by the Government, and nominated agent for boats, Mr. Markham succeeding as Resident at Benares, with Mr. Benn as his assistant. This arrangement was made under the necessity of the Governor-general having the agent of his choice.

Mr. Hastings appoints an agent at home to attend to his interests.

Mr. Hastings at this time intimated to the chairman of the Court of Directors, that he had thought proper to appoint an agent at home, for the purpose of attending to his political interests, and that he had selected Major John Scott, to whom he had given instructions, but had particularly provided that he would suffer no person whatever to perform any act in his name, that could be construed to imply a resignation of his authority, protesting against it, (as on a former occasion) as most unwarrantable.

Meets the Vizier.

The Vizier met Mr. Hastings at Chunar, on the 11th

* Proceedings, Council, February 1780.

1781-82. BENGAL.

11th September, when he evinced the strongest feelings of attachment to the Company and their interests. The arrangement then concluded with him led to the withdrawal of the temporary brigade, and three regiments of cavalry, and the stationing one regiment of sepoys at Lucknow, at a charge of 25,000 rupees per month. The army for Cawnpore was limited to the strength prescribed by the treaty of 1773. All British officers and pensioners were to be withdrawn, and certain jaghires resumed. The result was, an immediate supply of fifty-five lacs of ready money to the Company, and a stipulation for the payment of an additional twenty lacs, to complete the liquidation of his debt to them. The Vizier returned to his capital on the 25th September 1781.

Treaty with Scindiah.

During the Governor-general's residence at Chunar, an overture for peace reached him from Madajee Scindiah. It led to a separate treaty with that chief, effected through the agency of Colonel Muir, under instructions from Mr. Hastings of the 13th October.

Scindiah was to act as mediator in endeavouring to effect a peace between the Company and Hyder.* Mr. Anderson, on the part of the Governor-general, proceeded with full powers to the Mahratta camp.

In order to secure an additional military force at Madras, Mr. Hastings suggested the expediency of

* Printed Treaties.

of exchanging the circars for the loan of a considerable body of cavalry from the Nizam: the idea was not adopted by the Presidency of Fort St. George, who at the same time stated, that as no money could be got from the Nabob, he had consented to assign over his revenues of the Carnâtic, during the war, a formal deed being executed by his highness for the term of five years.* The Company's finances at this moment were at the lowest ebb: the army, the civil establishments, and all the public offices being greatly in arrear. The Poligars, who were the Nabob's dependants, had gone over to the enemy; and the Rajah of Travancore, so far from affording relief, had not given sufficient means to discharge the pay of the troops employed in his own territories. In this state of affairs, the intelligence from Bengal, that there was a prospect of peace with the Mahrattas, led the Madras government to congratulate the Court. They at the same time expressed their sense of the aid, both in money and provisions, which had been extended to them by the Supreme Government.† 1781-82. BENGAL.

In order more effectually to reduce Hyder's power, Lord Macartney suggested to Sir Eyre Coote the expediency of attacking Negapatam. The commander-in-chief was opposed to the measure, MADRAS. Lord Macartney resolves on attacking Negapatam.

* Letter from Madras, 15th December 1781.

† Letter from Madras, 30th and 31st December 1781.

1781-82. MADRAS. sure, upon which Lord Macartney determined to take the whole responsibility of it upon himself. The joint forces under Admiral Sir Edward Hughes and Sir Eyre Coote were accordingly directed to the object. Negapatam surrendered on the 12th November, with 6,551 prisoners of war, causing Hyder to evacuate all the strong posts in the Tanjore country. Sir Eyre Coote, although labouring under severe ill-health, persevered in conducting the military operations. To facilitate the means of obtaining supplies for the army, there not being a day's rice for the troops, Colonel Owen was despatched, in October, with one company of European grenadiers, one Bengal regiment, four battalions of sepoys, with two field pieces, into the Chittoor country, to intercept grain from the Poligars, and to throw in supplies to aid the garrison of Vellore, which had been invested by Hyder for some months. Accounts having reached Sir Eyre Coote that Colonel Owen's detachment was likely to be attacked, he immediately advanced to its support; but before he could join the Colonel, Hyder, with most of his forces, and all his light guns, had attacked him. The little band displayed the utmost gallantry, and its leader great judgment and discretion. After a day's severe fighting, Colonel Owen made a retreat in good order, with but comparatively small loss after contending with so overwhelming a force. The general, apprehensive that if Hyder obtained possession

Other operations.

possession of Vellore, his expulsion from the Carnatic would be rendered far more difficult, pushed on towards that fortress, in the hope of meeting with the enemy, and by defeating him, relieving the garrison. His attempt to bring Hyder to an engagement failed, but he reached Vellore on the morning of the 3d November, to the great joy of the troops, who had been confined there sixteen months, and would shortly have been constrained to surrender. Sir Eyre Coote felt called upon to address the Court in testimony of the distinguished conduct of Colonel Lang, the commandant, and his spirited support of the garrison, amidst such accumulated difficulties, for so protracted a period. On the 8th November, the general appeared before Chittoor, then in possession of the enemy. The garrison were obstinate in its defence, and had been much strengthened. Sir Eyre Coote made preparations for the storm, having previously declared that, in the event of his being obliged to proceed to extremities, every man in the garrison should be put to the sword. He was wounded in the course of the operations by a splinter from a stone shot. The garrison shortly capitulated. The army returned to cantonments, and the general having arrived at Madras, addressed a letter to the Court of Directors, in which he described the state of his health to be such as scarcely to admit of his turning himself in his bed. He then alluded to the change

1781-82. MADRAS.

1781-82. MADRAS. change in what he termed the military affairs in Bengal, referring to the measures of the Governor-general with the troops at Benares, and expressed his persuasion that no good could result from them. "Speaking from experience," he declared "that the versatility of the measures of the several Company's governments was such, that no commander-in-chief could act effectually, or with honour to himself, unless invested with more ample powers." Adverting to a mission sent by Lord Macartney to the King of Kandy, he stated that he knew nothing of it. He then commented upon the extraordinary act of the Governor-general in proceeding to the upper provinces, and on the folly of his not having seen that the detachment with him possessed ammunition,* as he ought to have been alive to the "contumacious temper of the Rajah," Cheyte Sing. Much allowance was to be made for the general's state of health, and the effect which it had upon his mind: whilst thus animadverting upon the Governor-general's assumption of military power, he unconsciously justifies Mr. Hastings, in the opinion he had formed of the Rajah's disposition to throw off allegiance to the Company's government. Other instances arose, in which Sir Eyre Coote evinced an irritability of temper that led him to put constructions on the conduct of the Government whom he was then serving, which tended to widen

* *Vide* page 594.

widen the misunderstanding that had arisen between the Supreme Council and that of Madras. 1781-82. MADRAS.

These differences were heightened by the course of duplicity and intrigue practised on the part of the Nabob. When the assignment of his revenues took place,* the Madras Presidency appointed a Board of Revenue Commissioners to manage the territories. The accounts were to be kept by the Commissioners, and submitted for the satisfaction of the Government and of the Nabob. Honour and integrity were indispensable in the transaction of so delicate and responsible a trust. In the month of August 1782, the Nabob addressed letters to several of the members of the Madras Council, in which he reviled the conduct of the governor, Lord Macartney, and charged him with mismanaging his country. He at the same time exerted all means of secret influence to undermine his Lordship's character and authority. The enmity of the Nabob was increased by Lord Macartney having expressed a decided opinion that, with reference to the nature and extent of the Nabob's pecuniary engagements, the assignment of his revenues ought to continue until his debts were liquidated. One of the methods which the Nabob took to effect his object, was that of preferring serious complaints against his Lordship to the Supreme Government, alleging, as the ground for such complaints, the mismanagement of

Intrigues of the Nabob against Lord Macartney.

* *Vide* page 599.

1781-82. MADRAS. of his revenues. In these attempts he was aided by his second son Ameer-ul-Omrah, a base intriguing character, who attempted to ingratiate himself with his father to the prejudice of his elder brother Omdut-ul-Omrah. In furtherance of his scheme, he caused a charge to be preferred against Mr. David Haliburton, the Persian translator to the Government, and one of the commissioners for the management of the assigned territory, knowing that if he succeeded in proving want of integrity in an individual filling a post which demanded the most scrupulous conduct, it would strengthen the claim of the Nabob to have his country restored to him. The attempt was communicated to the Government by Mr. Haliburton's own representation. He stated that he had received a letter, written by Mr. Ellis, an attorney of the Mayor's Court at Madras, demanding of him, in the name of Conary Row, the sum of 500 pagodas, which that native had given him in consideration of certain services to be rendered in his favour, but which engagement had not been fulfilled by Mr. Haliburton. This gentleman not only denied upon oath having either directly or indirectly received any sum of money from Conary Row, but declared that he never had any pecuniary dealings with him; he moreover produced a deposition made by the native himself, that every exertion had been used by Ameer-ul-Omrah to induce him to accuse

accuse Mr. Haliburton of having accepted a bribe. The Government felt called upon to address the Nabob, and caution him against these attempts on the part of his Highness Ameer-ul-Omrah to traduce the character of one of the Company's servants. The reply of the Nabob was couched in terms of violent abuse. He complained of the disgrace attempted to be charged upon his son, and openly declared that Mr. Haliburton had taken the money, and had kept Conary Row in prison for two days without food, under a guard, in order to compel him to give false evidence. With reference to this last charge, the fact appeared to be, that the native himself, apprehensive of the prince's enmity when he made the deposition, had requested a guard to protect him from his vengeance! The Government assured the Nabob that there was no desire to conceal the matter; that Mr. Haliburton had himself brought it forward, and that Conary Row had been summoned before the Council, where, on his examination, he gave the most complete refutation to every thing that had been asserted in the letters from the Nabob, and had likewise earnestly entreated the guard might be continued, to ensure his personal safety. Mr. Haliburton requested to retire from the offices of Persian translator and commissioner of the assigned revenue, until a full and complete enquiry had taken place, and a decision passed thereon by the Government; but they felt the charge

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charge to be so totally unfounded, that they resolved not to deprive themselves of his services. Notwithstanding these facts an action was subsequently brought against Mr. Haliburton by the attorney in the Madras Court for unlawfully receiving money from Conary Row. The charge not only completely failed, but the Court actually awarded triple damages to Mr. Haliburton.* It is

* Letter from Madras, 31st August 1782.

Mr. Haliburton appears to have been again exposed to the perilous effects of jealousy and intrigue, during the brief government of Mr. John Holland. A cowle had been granted for the preceding thirty years for the exclusive vend of betel-nut and tobacco within certain limits; in the cowle issued by Mr. Holland's government, the limits had been greatly extended. General complaints were urged against this measure by the natives who inhabited the districts to which the extended right of monopoly applied. Mr. Haliburton was reported to have urged them to resistance, in consequence of which the Government suspended him from the office of Persian translator and member of the Board of Revenue. This proceeding was founded upon the declaration of two natives, one of whom deposed that the conversation he had with Mr. Haliburton was in English, which he confessed he did not understand, and yet three days afterwards he swore to the truth of the contents of a petition which was entirely in English, and contained the very words in which Mr. Haliburton was supposed to have encouraged them to resist; and he also swore at the same time to the truth of the particulars of his previous examination, when he declared that he did not and now does not understand English. Upon this extraordinary evidence, without further inquiry into the character of the accusers, was Mr. Haliburton suspended. He was prepared to make the most solemn assertion of his innocence, and earnestly but ineffectually solicited investigation. The Directors, on being apprised of all the

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is scarcely possible to believe that such a state of things could have existed as is shewn, from a perusal of the records, to have been the case at the period in question.*

Proceedings in Parliament as to Sir Elijah Impey.

Intelligence of the appointment of Sir Elijah Impey to the Sudder Dewanny Adawlut reached England in October 1781. Doubts immediately arose in the minds of the Directors on the legality of the measure. The subject was forthwith taken up

the circumstances, condemned the conduct of the Government in the strongest terms. They observed, "even if we had not cause to suspect the purity of almost every measure of the short administration of Mr. John Holland, the single proceeding respecting the removal of Mr. Haliburton upon perjured evidence to drive him from the settlement to some remote corner, was sufficient to establish the strongest suspicions of corruption on the part of the Government." The Court ordered his immediate restoration to office.—*Letter to Madras, 6th May* 1791.

"When Mr. Haliburton resigned the service and returned to England in March 1795, the Madras Government bore honourable testimony to his merits and services as a faithful, zealous, and intelligent servant of the Company."—*Letter from Madras, 4th March* 1795.

"The Directors expressed their conviction that the eulogium passed on Mr. Haliburton was well merited. His conduct, first in acquiring, by an early and a laborious attention, a knowledge of the languages and of the customs of the country, and of matters relating to the revenue—and secondly, in exercising that knowledge in furthering the interests of his employers, whilst he held a conspicuous situation at the Revenue Board, was well worthy of applause, and we recommend it to the imitation of our servants."—*Letter to Madras, 4th October* 1797.

* The late Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, of posthumous notoriety, appears to have been brought into parliament by the Nabob as his agent, to advocate, as a British senator, the unworthy jobs of such a flagitious principal as Mahomed Ali.

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up by the House of Commons, who appointed a select committee to investigate the proceedings. They directed their attention, not only to the question of legality, but to the authority which had been exercised by the Governor-general, and to the effects it was calculated to produce upon the minds of the people of India.

In the interval between the appointment of the Committee and their Report, a change of ministry took place. Lord North resigned. The Marquis of Rockingham became first lord of the Treasury, Earl Shelburne and Mr. Fox being appointed the two secretaries of state, the office of the third secretary of state being abolished. Lord John Cavendish was chancellor of the Exchequer, the Duke of Portland lord-lieutenant of Ireland, Mr. Sheridan one of the under-secretaries of state, Admiral Keppel at the head of the Admiralty, and Mr. Burke was appointed paymaster of the forces and made a privy councillor.

Mr. Burke appears, from an early period of his political life, to have paid more attention to the affairs of India than almost any other subject. It is affirmed, that when the idea of a second commission to India was in agitation in 1769, an offer was made to him, in the event of its appointment, to be at its head, as his success in parliament might be doubtful, "few knowing what they are capable of when entering the House of Commons, and few coming out from thence without

out having found their just weight in the political balance." This circumstance accounts in some measure for his attention to India affairs. 1781-82. BENGAL.

The Report of the Committee was presented to the House on the 18th April 1782. It was taken up in a Committee of the whole House, by whom it was reported, that Sir Elijah Impey's appointment was wholly at variance with the beneficial purposes intended by the Act of 1773, and made the Supreme Court dependent upon the very authorities whose acts it was meant to control. That such appointments ought to be held as null and void, and that the Directors should order the same to be annulled. The Directors passed an unanimous resolution on the 24th April, removing Sir Elijah Impey. An address to the Throne on the 9th May was voted by the House of Commons for his recall from India, to answer to the charge of his accepting the office.

About the same time Reports were presented from the Secret Committee appointed to enquire into the causes of the Carnatic war. Mr. Dundas, the lord advocate of Scotland, had acted as chairman of the Committee, and to him was given the credit of having prepared those voluminous documents which were considered to be drawn up with the greatest judgment and ability. Reports on Carnatic war.

Mr. Dundas submitted to the House one hundred and eleven resolutions, founded on the Reports in question. The resolutions were divided

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into three classes, each class containing three distinct heads.

The *first* regarded the general system of government; it censured the conduct of Mr. Hastings, the governor-general, and that of Mr. Hornby, governor of Bombay, and declared it to be the duty of the Directors to recall them.

The *second* and *third* classes related to the affairs of the Carnatic. On these a bill of pains and penalties was brought in against Sir Thomas Rumbold, J. Whitehill, and P. Perring, Esqrs., for breaches of public trust and high crimes and misdemeanors.*

On the 28th May, the House of Commons came to the following resolution :—

"Resolved, That Warren Hastings, Esq., governor-general, and William Hornby, Esq., president of the Council at Bombay, having in sundry instances acted in a manner repugnant to the honour and policy of this nation, and thereby brought great calamities on India, and enormous expenses on the Company, it is the duty of the Directors to pursue all legal and effectual means for the removal of the said Governor-general and President from their respective offices, and to recall them to Great Britain."

The Court of Directors entered into a consideration of the various documents connected with the administration

* Little progress was made in prosecuting the matter during that session. The unsettled state of affairs in 1783 prevented the House of Commons taking it up until late in that year. At the close of the session, a motion to adjourn the question until October was carried, by which the matter fell to the ground and was never resumed.

administration of Mr. Hastings and Mr. Hornby, at six separate meetings, from the 31st May to the 18th June. On the 19th of that month, a Special General Court met at the requisition of nine proprietors, when it was 1782. BENGAL.

"Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Court, that the removing of Warren Hastings, Esq. the governor-general of Bengal, or any servants of the Company, merely in compliance with a vote of the House of Commons, without being satisfied that the grounds of delinquency against the said Warren Hastings, or such other servants, are sufficient of themselves to vindicate the Directors in coming to such resolution, would weaken the confidence which the servants of the Company ought to entertain of the justice of their employers, and will tend to destroy that independency, which the proprietors of East-India Stock ought to enjoy in the management of their own affairs."

It was also

"Resolved, That it be recommended to the Court of Directors not to carry into effect any resolution they may come to relative to the removal of Warren Hastings, Esq. till such resolution shall have been approved by a General Court."

At eleven subsequent meetings of the Court of Directors, held between the 20th June and the 2d October, the consideration of the resolution of the House of Commons, and of the dispatches connected therewith, from India, was resumed. On the 9th of October, four separate motions were submitted by the chairman, from the Committee of Correspondence, and having been discussed on

1782. BENGAL. the 16th, 17th, and 22d of that month, the Court of Directors on the latter

"Resolved, That the orders sent by the Directors to their servants in India, to abstain from schemes of conquest and extension of dominion, and to confine their views to a system of defence, forbidding all unnecessary interference in the quarrels with the country powers, or the entering into new engagements with them in offensive alliances, recommending at the same time the preservation of peace, and the maintenance of an inviolable character for moderation and good faith, by a steady adherence to treaties founded in wisdom and sound policy, and entirely consonant to the interests of the Company and the nation.

2d. "That it appears to this Court, that a contrary system of policy has been adopted and pursued by the Company's servants in India, in disobedience to those well advised orders of their superiors, whereby they have involved themselves in impolitic and contradictory negotiations, promoted and entered into offensive treaties, and carried on unnecessary and complicated wars, attended with an enormous expense, and by these and other instances of erroneous conduct, the Company have been loaded with large and heavy debts at all their settlements, and our national influence and reputation declined throughout Hindostan, whilst these measures have given birth to combinations among the country powers, dangerous to the safety of the Company's territories.

3d. "That it is incumbent on this Court to give a decisive confirmation to that system of conduct enjoined by the Directors, and heretofore ratified by a General Court, and in order to quiet the native princes in Hindostan, to restore confidence, and to shew the sincerity of our intentions, that an immediate stop be put to a system of policy

so

so ruinous in its consequences to this Company and the public.

4th. "That it is the opinion of this Court, that a steady perseverance in the system of conduct so frequently enjoined by the Court of Directors, cannot be expected from those servants, whose ideas of extension of dominion, either by negociation or conquest, have led them to depart from orders so often enforced, and therefore that it is expedient to remove Warren Hastings, Esq. from the office of Governor-general of Bengal."

Seven Directors recorded a dissent from the resolution of recall. On the 21st October, another Special General Court was held at the instance of nine proprietors, when the following motion was made:—

Court of Proprietors oppose his recall.

"That it appears to this Court, from incontestable evidence, drawn from the records of the Company, and supported by the unanimous opinion of the House of Commons, that the war in which we are now engaged with the Mahrattas was evidently founded on the sentiments of the Court of Directors, conveying demands on the Mahratta administration greatly exceeding the conditions of the treaty of Poorunder, which sentiments of the Court of Directors opened the first design of sending a detachment from Bengal to the Malabar coast, and that consequently it would be the height of injustice to lay the blame of that war, or the evils which have flowed from it, upon Mr. Hastings, when it appears that the dissatisfaction of the Court of Directors, expressed at the treaty of Poorunder, in their letters to Bengal of the 5th of February, and to Bombay of the 16th of April 1777, gave the strongest encouragement to both presidencies to seize the slightest pretence of provocation from the ministers of the Mahratta states,

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states, to renew their engagements with Ragobah. Neither have the measures adopted by Mr. Hastings, in consequence of such instructions, ever received the slightest censure from the Court of Directors. In consideration whereof, it is now recommended to the Court of Directors to rescind their late resolution, respecting the removal of Warren Hastings, Esq. governor-general of Bengal, more especially as it appears to this Court that, according to the late official despatches from Bengal, dated the 8th of April 1782, the prospect of peace with the Mahrattas was then propitious, because it seemed to be wished for by the Mahratta states, because hostilities with them had ceased for many months, and that a peace had actually been concluded with Mahdajee Scindia, one of the principal chiefs of that confederacy; and further, that the Government-general of Bengal were using every means in their power to effect a general pacification, and that the conduct of the said Government-general was tending to produce a general pacification, or to unite and support, by powerful resources, a general confederacy of the country powers, to defeat the combination of Hyder Ally and the French, (supposing the said Hyder Ally shall not accept of the reasonable terms of accommodation which have been offered to him in consequence of his proposals for peace,) merits the warmest approbation of this Court, and that therefore it would be evidently injurious to the interest of the Company, and the nation, to remove any of those principal servants of the Company, now discharging their duty with such uncommon exertions, ability, and unanimity, or to shake the authority reposed in them by the Legislature and the Company, at a period so critical, when the prosperity of the British interests in India will depend in a great measure on the confidence which the native princes of the country may place in the Government of Bengal."

The question being put by the ballot, on the 31st

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BENGAL.
Recall of Mr. Hastings.

31st October 1782, there were, out of 503 votes, a majority of 353 in favour of the resolution.

The Court of Directors having satisfied themselves that, in the opinion of the Company's counsel, the proprietors possessed a subsisting power of control in the removal of a governor-general,

"Resolved, That in compliance with the direction of the Court of Proprietors, the resolution of the Court of Directors of the 22d October, respecting the removal of Mr. Hastings, be rescinded."

A general letter to India, announcing the Court's determination, was then approved, but as the clause in the Act of 1781 required that all proposed letters from the Company to their Government in India should be subject to the approval of the Crown, the dispatch in question was transmitted to Mr. Secretary Townsend for the King's approbation. On the 16th of November, a letter was received by the Court from Mr. Townsend, intimating that the resolution of the Directors, formed in compliance with the directions of the General Court of Proprietors, was so directly repugnant to the sense of the House of Commons, that he had received his Majesty's commands to withhold any approbation to the draft, and that it was his Majesty's intention to order the whole of the proceedings relative to the business in question to be laid before Parliament; he was also to instruct the Chairs to suspend sending the draft to India.

When

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When the proprietors were acquainted with his Majesty's pleasure, they resolved to appoint a committee of nine of their body to watch over the rights of the Company.

Letter from Mr. Hastings as to a sum of money presented.

During the discussions at home respecting Mr. Hastings, he addressed the Court from Patna in January 1782, representing that when he was at Chunar, in the preceding year,* an offer of a considerable sum of money was made to him by the Vizier and by his minister.

"I accepted it without hesitation, and gladly, being entirely destitute both of means and credit, whether for your service or the relief of my own necessities. It was made, not in specie, but in bills. What I have received has been laid out in the public service, the rest shall be applied to the same account. The nominal sum is ten lacs of rupees, Oude currency. As soon as the whole is completed, I shall send you a faithful account of it, resigning the disposal of it entirely to the pleasure of your Honourable Court. If you shall adjudge the disposal to me, I shall consider it as the most honourable apportionment and reward of my labours, and I wish to owe my fortune to your bounty. I am now in my fiftieth year: I have passed thirty-one years in your service. My conscience allows me boldly to claim the merit of zeal and integrity, nor has fortune been unpropitious to their exertions. To these qualities I bound my pretensions. I shall not repine if you shall deem otherwise of my services; nor ought your decision, however it may disappoint my hope of a retreat adequate to the consequence and elevation of the office which I now possess, to lessen my gratitude for having been so long permitted to hold it, since it

* *Vide* page 597.

it has at least permitted me to lay up a provision, with which I can be contented in a more humble station."* 1782-83. BENGAL.

In fulfilment of the promise contained in the foregoing letter, Mr. Hastings wrote to the Court on the 22d May from Calcutta, and entered into an explanation of the several sums received by him and applied to the Company's use, amounting in the aggregate to nineteen lacs sixty-four thousand rupees, or nearly £200,000, from the month of October 1780 to August 1781.

These letters gave no indication of any expectation on the part of Mr. Hastings that his conduct as governor-general could have formed grounds for the displeasure either of Parliament or of the Directors. The one written by him in May was intended to have been sent by the *Lively*, then under despatch for Europe; but, by some cause, her departure was delayed, and with her the transmission of the letter also, as will be seen by a subsequent communication from Mr. Hastings, on learning the proceedings that had taken place in Parliament.

The fleets of France and England, the former under M. Suffrein, had various skirmishes off the coast of Coromandel. In the month of February 1782, a French fleet of twelve sail of the line, with MADRAS.

* The Directors, in a letter of the 15th January 1783, stated that they were precluded by the Act of Parliament from appropriating the ten lacs as suggested in Mr. Hastings' letter of January 1782.

1782-83. MADRAS. Naval engagement off Trincomalee.

with frigates and transports, appeared off Pulli-cat. On the 8th, Sir Edward Hughes arrived at Madras from Trincomalee, with the *Superb*, *Exeter*, *Monarch*, *Bedford*, *Worcester*, *Eagle*, and the *Sea-horse* frigate. On the 10th he was joined by Commodore Alms with three ships of the line, and one transport containing General Meadows and Colonel Fullarton, with four hundred King's troops. On the 15th the French fleet appeared off Madras, and on the 16th stood to the southward. The English admiral weighed, and followed the enemy till they were separated from their frigates and transports. Sir Edward Hughes made the signal for chasing the latter, in which the *Isis* being the foremost, came up with and re-took the *Lauriston*, a large transport laden with military stores and three hundred troops, together with several English vessels with grain, which had been captured by the enemy on the coast. The enemy's fleet bore down, and having the advantage of the wind, brought eight of their ships to engage five of the English, the other ships on either side not being able to get into action. The engagement lasted from four until half-past six, when the French ceased firing, and hauled their wind. The *Superb* and *Exeter* were much damaged, having many shot between wind and water. Sir Edward Hughes went to Trincomalee to refit, and returned to Madras on the 10th March to renew the attack on the enemy, whose ships had been

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been dispersed during the action. Their hospital ship, the *Duc de Toscanne*, having come to anchor in the roads of Negapatam, in the belief that it was a friendly port, was captured by the *Chapman* Indiaman.

On the 8th April, Sir Edward Hughes came again in sight of the French squadron, then consisting of eighteen sail. On the 12th, the French, having the wind, engaged him; the action commenced at half-past one P.M., and ended at forty minutes past six. Both fleets anchored within five miles of each other until the 19th. In the interval, Sir Edward Hughes had refitted all his fleet, with the exception of the *Monmouth*, which had lost her main and mizen-masts, their places being supplied with good jury-masts. The enemy made a shew of renewing the engagement; Sir E. Hughes waited, with springs on his cables, but the enemy, after approaching within two miles, stood out to sea, and was seen no more. Sir E. Hughes' force consisted of twelve ships, in which there were 247 killed, and 320 wounded. The number in the French ship *Hero*, the flag-ship, killed and wounded, was 200; the admiral being obliged to shift his flag from her to the *Ajax*.

MALABAR COAST. Hyder and the French.

On the Malabar coast, the blockade of Tellicherry by Hyder's troops was raised by the arrival of a force under Major Abingdon from Bombay. After a severe action, Hyder's army under Sudass Cawn

1782. MADRAS. Hyder defeated

Cawn was defeated, the whole of his treasure and the *matériel* of his army falling into possession of the British, and a communication opened on either side of Tellicherry, the country being cleared of the enemy. This check to Hyder on the coast of Malabar was met by the defeat of the detachment under Colonel Braithwaite, on the borders of the kingdom of Tanjore, by Tippoo Saib; on which occasion the interference of M. Lally saved the force from annihilation: many of the captives, however, suffered a long imprisonment at Seringapatam.

A detachment of French troops having been landed at Pondicherry in March 1782, they were joined by a body of Hyder's forces. In the month of April, M. Du Chemin, the commanding officer of the French forces at Porto Novo, appeared before Cuddalore, which surrendered to him, the inhabitants having no means of defence. The prisoners were exchanged against an equal number of French. As this was an act wholly independent of any communication with Hyder, M. Du Chemin desired to become possessed of Cuddalore in right of his own nation; understanding that he was also to be put in immediate possession of Chillembrum, one of the French officers demanded the surrender of the keys from the sepoy guard, who refused to deliver them up without orders from his commanding officer; upon which the Frenchman struck the sepoy with his sword.

sword. The matter being reported to Hyder, he answered, "Turn the French and their stores out from Chillembrum." In consequence of which order, they were not only obliged to quit the fort, but for want of bullocks were constrained to drag their artillery back to Porto Novo !* Permacoil was besieged and taken in May by Hyder, and an attack meditated on Wandewash. The latter was however prevented by the advance of Sir Eyre Coote, who discovered the enemy's encampment about twenty miles on the road from Permacoil, the French having joined it that morning. Whilst the force under Sir E. Coote was marking out the camp at Arnee, Hyder suddenly appeared. An engagement ensued on the 2d June; the enemy were repulsed, and Sir Eyre Coote returned to the presidency, it being the last occasion on which he was opposed to Hyder.

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Peace was concluded with the Mahrattas by the treaty of Salbey, the 17th May 1782, through the mediation of Madajee Scindia.† Ragobah, to whom was to be attributed the lengthened hostilities in which the two powers had been engaged, had a fixed allowance secured to him of 25,000 rupees per month. The forts and districts of Billapore and Callian, the autgoms adjoining Salsette, the fort and island of Bassein and its dependencies,

BOMBAY. Treaty of Salbey.

* Letter from Bengal, May 1782.

† *Vide* Printed Treaties, page 99.

1782. BENGAL AND BOMBAY.

dependencies, and the valuable districts in the Guzerat country annexed to the chiefships of Surat and Broach, were formally surrendered to the Poonah government and Futty Sing Guicowar. The city and pergunnah of Broach being put in the possession of Madajee Scindia, conformably with the grant from the Governor-general in Council, who observed that his conduct in the negociation, as well as his claim founded on the treaty of Worgaum, recommended the cession. They considered that it would effect the important object of attaching so distinguished a chief to the Company's interests. They were also of opinion that the possession of Broach was no advantage to the Company, whatever it might be in the estimation of the Council at Bombay. The expenses of the establishment were nearly equal to its revenues; future troubles would arise about the boundaries, and the price of cotton, the staple of the district, rose in Bombay with our possession of the place. "The natural consequences of a commercial place possessed by men who are dealers in the specific article of trade which it produces."*

Representation from Bombay.

The Bombay Council, as anticipated by the Supreme Government, observed in their despatches to the Court of Directors, that "the whole of your possessions to the westward are now reduced to the castle and dependent revenues

* Letter from Bengal, 15th July 1782.

1782. BENGAL.

nues of Surat, as held since the first acquisition of them in 1759. A powerful and dangerous neighbour is now placed close to this remaining possession, which it will be necessary to guard with a watchful eye; but it will be equally unavailing and mortifying to expatiate on this subject, or the value of the countries you have lost by this treaty. We shall rejoice should we have future occasion to enumerate the benefits resulting from it. This presidency must, from henceforward, require from the Bengal treasury a large and annual supply of money for the indispensable occasions of the Company's concerns under our management."

After adverting to the heavy charges incurred on account of increased establishment, they remarked: "In forming the new arrangements for this presidency, it will be a question well worthy of serious consideration, whether an extraordinary military force, kept up at Bombay, will not conduce, in a greater degree, to ensure the peace of India and the general safety of the Honourable Company's possessions, than a much larger force maintained in any other quarter; and whether an increase of force at Bombay will not permit of a proportional decrease in the establishments and military expenses at the other presidencies. This is a question of general, not of partial concern, and of the highest importance to the Honourable Company's welfare,

1782. BENGAL. welfare. According to the ideas we have formed upon the subject, the Company's means should be employed in such a manner as may best contribute to the defence of their estate, without too nice distinctions whether the money is expended at Bengal, Madras, or Bombay."

By the treaty of Salbey the Paishwa bound himself, for the whole of the Mahrattas, not to suffer other European nations to establish factories in their dominions. Nana Furnavese, the Paishwa's prime minister, and Madajee Scindia, were the two great parties who now governed the Mahratta empire.

1782-83. BENGAL and MADRAS. Effort to free the Carnatic. Every effort was now to be made to free the Carnatic from the forces of Hyder. At this important juncture, serious differences arose between Lord Macartney and Sir Eyre Coote. The latter appealed to the Supreme Government against the acts of the Council at Madras; he desired to be left to the free and uncontrolled exercise of his own judgment in following out the military operations which he deemed best calculated to effect the great end in view, he sent his Persian interpreter to Bengal for the purpose of giving a full explanation on all points of difference. Lord Macartney likewise deputed his private secretary to counteract the effects that might be produced by the mission of Mr. Graham. As the Supreme Government felt that their decision must be,

1782-83. BENGAL.

be condemnatory of one of the parties, they determined to abstain from entering into the merits of the question, a course which Lord Macartney described to be prejudging the matter.

As the Council in Bengal considered the Carnatic to be in a state of actual invasion, they felt that every deference should be paid to the zeal, exertion, and circumspection of Sir Eyre Coote, who, in despite of a most severe illness, had persevered in the discharge of the most arduous duties, and had attached to him the army, who reposed implicit confidence in him. Under these circumstances, the Supreme Council felt that his wishes should be gratified to the fullest extent. They accordingly directed the Madras Government to concede to him the entire and unparticipated command of all the forces under their presidency, with the exception of the garrison of Fort St. George. They enforced the recommendation by placing all the Bengal troops on foreign service under his control, observing, "that every government must of course possess an ultimate and overruling authority; and the right of exercising such authority, which is inherent in it, must be also invariable and perpetuate, notwithstanding any restrictions which it may impose upon itself for particular purposes." They then offered various suggestions as to supplies and moving the army.*

The

* Letter from Bengal, November 1782.

1782-83. BENGAL. The President and Select Committee at Madras intimated that they should pay implicit obedience to the orders of the Supreme Government, and apprised Sir Eyre Coote that they had invested him with "all the powers, authorities, and responsibilities derived from Bengal." Bitter and acrimonious feelings arose between them and the Commander-in-chief. They remarked to the Supreme Council, that the ancient constitutional system of the government of Madras had been subverted by the power delegated to Sir Eyre Coote. The general was shortly afterwards constrained, on account of his health, to embark for Calcutta.

In the month of December 1782, Mr. Hastings, ignorant of the proceedings of the Court of Proprietors regarding him, addressed the Directors with reference to the parliamentary inquiry. He adverted to the letter which had been written by him in May, but not forwarded to England.* He accordingly transmitted it, accompanied by an affidavit of Mr. Larkins, the accountant-general, to the effect, that the letter in question had been sealed in that month, and delivered for transmission to the Court. "The despatch having been protracted, I send the affidavit, and feel that the parliamentary inquiry has placed me in an unfortunate position, because it exposes me to the incorrect imputations from the occasion that

* *Vide* page 617.

that enquiry has since furnished, but which were well known when that letter was written, and written in conformity to former promises. He then referred to the affidavit of Mr. Larkins, and expressed the mortification he felt at being reduced to the necessity of any such precaution for guarding his reputation against dishonour. 1782-83. BENGAL.

If I had at any time possessed that degree of confidence from my immediate employers which they have never withheld from the meanest of my predecessors, I should have disdained to use these attestations. How I have drawn upon me a different treatment I know not—it is sufficient that I have not merited it in the course of thirty-two years' service, ten of them employed in maintaining the powers and discharging the duties of the first office of the British Government in India. The Honourable Company ought to know whether I possess the integrity and honour which are the first requisites for such a station. If I wanted these, they would have afforded me but too powerful incentives to suppress the information, which I now convey to them through you, and to appropriate to my own use the sums which I have already passed to their credit by the unworthy, and pardon me if I add, dangerous reflections which they have passed upon me, for the first communication of this kind, and your own experience will suggest to you there are persons who would profit by the warning. The exigency of the public service required them. I could have concealed them, had I wrong motives, from you and the public eye, for ever; and I know the difficulty to which a spirit of injustice may subject me for my candour and avowal, are greater than any possible inconvenience that could have attended the concealment, except the dissatisfaction of my own mind: these difficulties are but a few of those which I have suffered in your service.

1782-83. BENGAL. The applause of my own breast is the surest reward, and was the support of my mind in meeting them; your applause and that of my country are my next wishes in life.

The Company were at this time relieved from one of their most powerful enemies. Hyder died between the 4th and 7th December. Meer Kurreem, his second son, was with him at the time with Mahomed Ally, one of the generals in command of the main army. Tippoo, his eldest son who inherited his father's enmity against the Company, and who became so formidable a foe, was detached against Colonel Humberstone, who had been sent from Bombay to the Malabar coast, but had taken possession of Calicut and other inferior places. His instructions confined him to defensive measures; but having commenced offensive operations, the Bombay Government dispatched Brigadier-general Matthews to support him. Tippoo, incensed at the proceedings of Colonel Humberstone, departed rapidly from the Carnatic for the purpose of cutting him off at Mungary Cottah. Humberstone being apprized of Tippoo's intention, blew up the fortifications, and fell back to Ramgerry; from whence, on hearing of Tippoo's approach, he also retired, first destroying the works. On reaching Panany, he delivered over the command to Colonel Macleod, who had arrived from Madras. That officer found himself surrounded by a formidable enemy; but the position of the English army was naturally strong, and

and was improved by works thrown up for the purpose. The enemy, led by M. Lally at the head of his Europeans, made a vigorous and regular attack on the 28th November, but was entirely defeated. Tippoo recrossed the Coleroon on the 12th December, and suddenly decamped, proceeding by rapid marches to Palacatcherry. 1783. BENGAL.

Brigadier-general Matthews, who was to have reinforced Colonel Humberstone, joined Colonel Macleod, and took Onore by storm on the 5th January 1783. The Bombay Government having received accounts of Hyder's death, ordered General Matthews to penetrate through the Ghauts to the Bednore country. The general passed the Ghauts, and gained possession of Bednore in February. There the misunderstanding arose on the subject of prize and other points, in which Colonels Humberstone, Macleod, and Major Shaw, differed so widely from General Matthews, that they quitted him, and returned to Bombay. On their representation, General Matthews, who had kept the Bombay Government in utter ignorance of the whole of his measures, was superseded, and Colonel Macleod appointed to the command. Accompanied by Colonel Humberstone and Major Shaw, he proceeded from Bombay in the *Ranger* to join the troops. The vessel was attacked off Gheria by a Mahratta fleet. Lieutenant Pruen, the commander of the *Ranger*, fought his vessel with the greatest courage until all on board were 1783. BOMBAY.

1783. BOMBAY.

were either killed or wounded. Major Shaw was killed by a shot; Colonel Humberstone was shot through the lungs; Lieutenant John Taylor, of the Bombay troops, was shot through the body; Lieutenant Seton, of the Bombay artillery, and Lieutenant Pruen, were wounded on boarding. In the beginning of the action, Lieutenant-colonel Macleod received two wounds in his left hand and shoulder, and a little before the close a musket-ball passed through his lungs and spleen. They were carried into Gheria, where Colonel Humberstone died of his wounds; but Colonel Macleod, after a considerable period, recovered.

Tippoo Sultaun determined to relinquish all other objects for the recovery of the favourite possessions which he had lost in the Bednore country. Colonel Macleod being a prisoner, rendered it necessary to appoint a provisional successor. Major Campbell, of His Majesty's 42d regiment, was nominated, to whom Brigadier-general Matthews was directed to deliver over the command of the troops collected to oppose the enemy. The Madras government had little hope of being able to support the force in the Bednore country; they nevertheless desired Colonel Lang to use every exertion to join the troops under General Matthews, who had sent advice of the enemy's approach with a body of fifty thousand men, and twenty-five guns, to the eastward of Bednore. The conduct of Matthews was inexplicable: he dispatched

dispatched the most contradictory statements from time to time, as to the approach, as well as to the strength of Tippoo's army, and instead of returning to the Ghauts, marched out of Bednore with a force of little more than two thousand men to meet the enemy. He was immediately driven back into the fort by a French detachment, with the loss of five hundred of his men. The report of the disaster reaching Cundapore, the garrison, panic-struck, fled without even the appearance of the enemy, some of the fugitives taking refuge in the fort of Onore. The firmness and prudence of the late Major (then Captain) Torriano, who commanded at Onore, not only preserved the troops in the fort from being infected with the panic, but, through his spirited exertions, an attempt was made to recover the artillery which had been abandoned at Cundapore. 1783. BOMBAY.

In April 1783 the garrison at Bednore capitulated to Tippoo; the survivors suffered the most cruel indignities, General Matthews, with many of his officers, being marched into the interior. A general belief existed, that they had been poisoned by Tippoo's orders, but the Supreme Government, upon the reports from Matthews himself as well as from other grounds, were of opinion that he fell a sacrifice to his own violent disposition, and to the groundless apprehension that Tippoo meant to cut him off.* After the reduction of

* Letter from Bengal, 20th October 1784.

1783. BOMBAY. of Bednore, Tippoo appeared before Mangalore, which fort was commanded by Major Campbell. During the siege accounts were received, in July, of the peace between England and France. The French commander, on learning the event, positively refused to permit his troops to act in any manner against the English; the siege of Mangalore was accordingly converted into a blockade. The garrisons of Mangalore and Onore had been reduced to the greatest distress; but, under the exertions of their gallant commanders, stood out until relief was afforded by the arrival of a force from Bombay.

The command of the army on the coast, after the departure of Sir Eyre Coote, had devolved upon General Stuart. That officer was impressed with a belief that the powers which had been specially vested by the Supreme Government in Sir Eyre Coote naturally devolved upon him. Throughout the discussions with the Governor and Council of Madras, as to the best course of proceedings to be adopted on the death of Hyder, to rid the Carnatic of Tippoo, he not only differed from the Governor, but disputed the powers of the civil authority over the King's troops, which led Lord Macartney to record his views in the following terms:

His Majesty has been graciously pleased to send out troops to the assistance of the Company; he has expressly declared them to be for their service, and they are actually

in their pay. The King has formed regulations for their interior discipline, and has reserved to himself to fill up the vacancies which may happen in them; but how they are to be employed, and when and where their services are to be performed, must depend on those whom they are sent to serve. The authority to conduct all military operations lodged in the Company's representatives, cannot be separated from the authority over the troops which are to execute them. 1783. BOMBAY.

The King gives, therefore, to officers coming to India, and the Secretary of State afterwards transmits to them, no instructions as to any military operations. They are not officially told from home what war they are to wage, what country to attack, or what expedition to undertake: they are simply informed, that they are sent to the assistance of the India Company, to whom the obedience of the officers as well as troops is, by this very act, transferred while they remain in India. The military laws, which do not say that the King's troops in India are to obey the Company and its representatives, do not say that the King's troops in England are to obey the King or his commands signified by his Secretaries of State or of War, but both are equally understood. The senior officer of the King's troops in India is vested with no unlimited power. He must receive orders before he is empowered to act; he has got no orders from the Crown, he must therefore necessarily take them from the authority commanding where he is sent.

Before the India Company had any extensive possessions, when the war that was to be waged in India was chiefly intended against an European and a national enemy, yet the instructions of the commanding officer of the reinforcement sent by the Crown, expressly directed him to follow the determinations of the Company's representatives; nor was a failure considered justifiable on his part, unless a council

of

1783. BOMBAY. of officers, particularly named in the instructions, should deem the plan proposed to be impracticable.

You will observe by what is above stated, that the commander-in-chief of your forces, in addition to the power and influence which that station confers, asserts and maintains, in a separate capacity, an independent authority over the King's troops, which now constitute the principal strength of your army, and avows an obedience to another authority, superior and preferable to that which he owes to your representatives.

We conceive that there is but a slight transition from refusal to employ the King's troops upon a requisition from the civil government, to the employing them without a requisition; and we submit to you, to what uses such an authority might be applied, and where the consequence might end.

It would avail but little towards the retrieval of those consequences, that his character, property, or life, was answerable: the forfeiture of any or all of these would be a poor compensation for your loss.

MADRAS. General Stuart having, contrary to the express orders of the council at Madras, sent private instructions to the force under Colonel Fullarton, he was positively required to abstain from issuing orders or instructions to any of the King's or Company's officers employed at a distance from the presidency, excepting on matters of detail or the discipline of the troops, without previously communicating such orders or instructions to the Select Committee for their approbation.

The state of affairs on the coast induced Sir Eyre Coote to make an offer of his service, and to proceed

proceed again to Madras. He sailed from Calcutta in the private ship *Resolution*, on the 7th March. The French Admiral, aware of his intention, kept four of his best sailing ships, two of the line and two frigates, cruising off the roads of Madras to intercept them. They fell in with the *Resolution*, and chased her for four days and four nights incessantly, it being moonlight. They were sometimes within a league of the *Resolution*. The General felt all the anxiety that could be suffered by an active mind in such a situation under such circumstances. He was almost perpetually watching upon deck, and could not enjoy any rest, frequently fainting from fatigue. The enemy at length gave over the chase, and the ship reached Madras the 24th April; but "the good old General had sustained too severe a shock, and died four days afterwards."* 1783. MADRAS.

The French were strongly fortified at Cuddalore. The Marquis de Bussy had arrived to take the command, and had brought with him a force from the Mauritius, consisting of fifteen thousand volunteers, besides three hundred Caffres for the guns, and two thousand sepoys. Various discussions took place, in which General Stuart expressed his doubts as to the correctness of the reports of Hyder's death, and dissented from the president regarding the course to be pursued in support of the force opposed to Tippoo in the Bednore

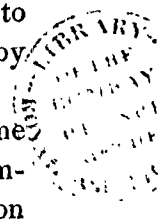
* Letter from Bengal, 20th October 1783.

1783. MADRAS. Bednore country, as well as in the operations to be followed in the Carnatic. The army having occupied five weeks, and expended 19,000 bags of rice in accomplishing a march of about seventy miles, approached Cuddalore in the month of June. The attack on the outworks was confided to General Bruce, by whom it was conducted with great skill and bravery. The engagement becoming general, the reserve under the commander-in-chief was brought up. The French fought with such determined valour that the assailants were repulsed; and a sortie was made by the garrison to drive off the reserve. In the eagerness of pursuit, the French advanced too far from the works, when the Bengal sepoy grenadiers turned, and "with the most determined bravery" gained possession of a strong-hold that had been the point of contention, upon which the enemy abandoned the whole of their outworks and retired within the fortress.

The French fleet under M. Suffrein appeared in the month of June off Cuddalore, at the same time with Sir Edward Hughes commanding the English fleet: some cannonading passed, but no close engagement took place.

At this period, intelligence arrived that preliminary articles of peace with France, Spain, Holland, and America, had been agreed to. On the 24th June, the President and Select Committee sent a deputation to the officer commanding

ing the French forces, with a proposal for a cessation of arms, until peace was regularly confirmed. Mr. Sadlier, senior member of the Select Committee, and Mr. Staunton, private secretary to Lord Macartney, formed the deputation to Cuddalore, where they were well received by M. de Bussy and the Chevalier de Suffrein. 1783. MADRAS.



Serious differences arose between the Supreme Government and the President and Select Committee at Madras, regarding both the negociation through the commissioners with Tippoo, and the proposition from Bengal for the restoration of the revenues of the Carnatic to the Nabob. The latter measure, although opposed to the orders from home, was felt to be so important by the Supreme Government, that they contemplated the removal of Lord Macartney, in the event of his Lordship persevering in maintaining his own views, of not relinquishing the assignment made by the Nabob.*

The whole course of General Stuart's proceedings, during the twelve months that he commanded the army, had been such as to induce the Government of Madras to remove him from that station. His subsequent conduct led to his being placed in arrest, dismissed in general orders by the Government, and sent home. Sir John Burgoyne, the King's officer next in rank, having on that occasion signified his intention not to accept the post

* Bengal Secret Consultations, October 1783.

1783. MADRAS. post of commander of the forces, to which the Madras government proposed to appoint him, Colonel Lang, a Company's officer, who so highly distinguished himself at Vellore,* was promoted by the Government to the rank of lieutenant-general, and invested with the command. Sir John Burgoyne was placed under arrest. The decided conduct of Lord Macartney infused a general spirit of obedience, and maintained the supremacy of the civil power in the administration committed to his charge.

In October 1783, a letter was received by the governor of Madras from Tippoo Sultaun, indicating in terms of moderation a desire for peace, and referring to his vakeel, Appajee Ram, for his sentiments on the subject; intimating at the same time, that he had sent orders to his sirdars to cease hostilities, and to soften the rigours of confinement suffered by the prisoners.

The Supreme Government attributed to the resolution of Lord Macartney not to relinquish the assignment of the Carnatic, the unfavourable impression created in the mind of M. Bussy, whom the commissioners met at Cuddalore. By a mutual arrangement, the forts and districts of Comboon, in the Cuddapah country, were to be relinquished to the Company; Chittaput in the Carnatic being immediately evacuated on the part of Tippoo, who subsequently issued orders for the abandonment

* *Vide* page 601.

abandonment of the whole of the forts in that country. He then signified his wish that the commissioners should come to him, promising that he would release all the English prisoners. The Supreme Government observed "that any peace with Tippoo will be no longer lasting than it is his interest to permit it."* 1783. MADRAS.

A report having reached Colonel Fullarton, that Tippoo had recommenced hostilities against Mangalore, he moved towards Palachacherry, and reduced it on the 14th November, and Coimbatore on the 25th of that month.

In consequence of a difference of opinion between Messrs. Sadlier and Staunton, regarding Tippoo's demand that Mangalore should be delivered up to him, John Hudleston, Esq. the secretary to the President and Select Committee, was joined to the commission; the majority was to decide, and the dissenting member to sign the agreement. Mr. Hudleston was accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Schwartz, the Danish missionary, a gentleman of distinguished integrity and of great skill in the languages of the country, who consented to proceed with the commissioners. They reached Tippoo's camp on the 4th February. Their first audience took place on the day following, and a conference on business on the 6th. Mangalore having capitulated under Colonel Campbell, on the 30th January, to Tippoo's forces, deprived the

* Letter from Bengal, 31st December 1783.

1783. MADRAS. the commissioners of an important advantage in conducting the negociation. In the course of the discussions, the Supreme Government had to meet various pretensions urged by Madajee Scindiah, on behalf of the Mahrattas. Mr. Hastings felt that under the ninth article of the treaty of Salbey, their interests, and the claims which they had to be treated with every consideration in the eyes of the native powers generally, demanded the utmost attention. The personal claims of Madajee Scindiah, who negociated on behalf of the Paishwa the treaty above-mentioned, were also fully acknowledged. When, therefore, the basis of the treaty ultimately agreed upon with Tippoo had been framed, the Governor-general addressed Madajee Scindia, declaring that it was in every respect conformable to the article in question, and ascribed to him and to the Mahratta state, that degree of merit, on the completion of the negotiation, which he felt to be simply their due. The Nizam at the same time compromised his dispute with the Mahrattas for their chout, by paying them thirty-two lacs of rupees.

After various protracted discussions, in the course of which the temper of Tippoo was strongly manifested, negociations terminated in the treaty of Mangalore. It consisted of ten articles. It included the Rajahs of Tanjore, and Travancore—the Biby of Cannanore—the Rajah and Zemindars on the Malabar coast.

The

1783.
MADRAS.

The Carnatic was to be completely evacuated by Tippoo, and all the forts surrendered, with the exception of those of Amboorgur and Latgur. All the prisoners, European and native, were to be immediately released. The forts of Onore, Carwar, and Sadashevagar, were to be given up to Tippoo, on the Malabar coast; also the districts of Caroor, Aunachourchy, and Duraparam, and likewise the fort and district of Dindigul. The district of Cannanore was to be delivered up to Ali Rajah Biby, the queen of that country. No further claim was to be made by Tippoo on the Carnatic. The commercial privileges secured to the Company by Hyder, were to be confirmed to them by the present treaty; and Calicut, which had been possessed by the Company until 1779, was to be restored. The treaty was to be ratified by the Supreme Government, and exchanged with Tippoo Sultaun within three months.*

BENGAL.
Court's views on the case of Cheyte Sing.

During the progress of these important affairs on the coast, Mr. Hastings had received the sentiments of the Court of Directors on his proceedings at Benares.†

The Court passed a resolution declaratory that the treaty in 1775 confirmed the zemindary of Benares to the Company in perpetuity; that Cheyte Sing was to have the management, subject to the Company's sovereignty, on paying a certain tribute; that the Governor-general and council had recommended Cheyte Sing to keep up a body of two thousand horse, but at the same time declared it was no obligation; that the conduct of the Governor-general towards the Rajah whilst at

* *Vide* Printed Treaties, page 393.

† Letter to Bengal, August 1782.

1783. BENGAL. at Benares was improper, and that the imprisonment of his person, thereby disgracing him in the eyes of his subjects and others, was unwarrantable and highly impolitic, and might tend to weaken the confidence which the native princes of India ought to have in the justice and moderation of the Company's government. This announcement reached Mr. Hastings at a moment when his feelings were ill fitted to bear reproof:—he replied to the Court's dispatch in the following terms:

Reply of Mr. Hastings.

I understand that these resolutions regarding Cheyte Sing were either published or intended for publication; the authority from whence they proceed leads to the belief of the fact. Who are the readers? Not the proprietors alone, whose interest is immediately concerned in them, and whose approbation I am impelled, by every motive of pride and gratitude, to solicit, but the whole body of the people of England, whose passions have been excited on the general subject of the conduct of their servants in India; and before them I am arraigned and prejudged of a violation of the national faith in acts of such complicated aggravation, that, if they were true, no punishment short of death could atone for the injury which the interest and credit of the public has sustained in them.

He then gave the most unqualified denial to the facts alleged as to Cheyte Sing's uncontrolled right; also as to his being free from any other demand, and likewise regarding the two thousand horse. He stated that:

It was not stipulated that Cheyte Sing should furnish any given number, but that what were maintained should be

be for the defence of the general state. He denied that Cheyte Sing was bound by no other tie than the payment of his tribute, for he was bound by the fealty of obedience to every order of the government which he served, his own letters being referred to as affording proofs. He denied that Cheyte Sing was a native prince of India, for he was the son of a collector of the revenue of that province, which his acts, and the misfortunes of his master, enabled him to convert to his own permanent and hereditary possession. "The man whom you have thus ranked among the princes of India will be astonished when he hears it—at an elevation so unlooked-for; nor less at the independent rights which he will not know how to assert, unless the example you have thought it consistent with justice, however opposite to policy, to shew, of becoming his advocate against your own interests, should inspire any of your own servants to be his advisers and instructors." Mr. Hastings referred to his narrative as explanatory of all the circumstances, and then dwelt upon the injury likely to arise from the support of a native against the Government; remarking, "it is now a complete period of eleven years since I first received the nominal charge of your affairs; in the course of that time I have had invariably to contend, not only with ordinary difficulties, but with such as most naturally arose from the opposition of those very powers from whom I primarily derived my authority, and which were required for the support of it. My exertions, though applied to an unwearied and consistent line of actions, have been occasional and desultory; yet I please myself with the hope that in the annals of your dominions which shall be written after the extinction of recent prejudice, this term of its administration will appear not the least conducive to the interests of the Company, nor the least reflective of the honour of the British name. Had sufficient support been given, what

1783. BENGAL.

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good might have been done! You, Honourable Sirs, can attest the patience and temper with which I have submitted to all the indignities heaped upon me in a long service. It was the duty of fidelity which I essentially owed to it; it was the return of gratitude which I owed, even with the sacrifice of life, had that been exacted, to the Company, my original masters and most indulgent patrons. There was an interval during which my authority was wholly destroyed; but another was substituted, and that, though irregular, was armed with the public belief of an influence invariably upholding it, which gave it a vigour scarcely less effectual than that of a constitutional power. Besides, your government had no external danger to agitate and discover the looseness of its composition.

The case is now widely different; while your executive was threatened by wars with the most formidable powers of Europe, added to your Indian enemies, and while you confessedly owed its preservation to the seasonable and vigorous exertions of this government, you chose that season to annihilate its constitutional powers. You annihilated the influence of its executive members. You proclaimed its annihilation—you have substituted no other, unless you suppose it may exist, and can be effectually exercised in the body of your council at large, possessing no power of motion, but an inert submission to your commands. It therefore remains for me to perform the duty which I had assigned myself, as the final purpose of this letter, to declare, as I now most formally do, that it is my desire that you will be pleased to obtain the early nomination of a person to succeed me in the government of Fort William; to declare that it is my intention to resign your service so soon as I can do it without prejudice to your affairs, after the allowance of a competent time for your choice of a person to succeed me; and to declare that if, in the intermediate time,

time, you shall proceed to order the restoration of Rajah Cheyte Sing to the zemindarry, from which he was dispossessed for crimes of the greatest enormity, and your council shall resolve to execute the order, I will instantly give up my station and the service. I am morally certain that my successor, whoever he may be, will be allowed to possess and exercise the necessary power of his station, with the confidence and support of those who, by their choice of him, will be interested in his success.* 1783. BENGAL.

The support, by the Court, of the Madras Government, in opposition to the views of the Supreme Government, their objection to the appointment of Mr. R. J. Sulivan by the Governor-general to Hyderabad, a nomination made solely on account of his abilities and qualifications, and their support of Mr. Bristow at Oude, led Mr. Hastings to observe, on again addressing the Court,

At whatever period your decision may arrive, may the government fall into the hands of a person invested with the powers of the office, not disgraced, as I have been, with an unsubstantial title, without authority, and with a responsibility without the means of discharging it. May he, at least, possess such a portion of exclusive control as may enable him to interpose with effect on occasions which may tend to the sacrifice of your political credit.†

He appealed in strong terms in favour of Mr. Sulivan, who had been dismissed by the Court:

Among the many mortifications to which I have been continually subjected, there is none which I so severely feel as

* Letter to Court, 20th March 1783.

† October 1783.

1783. BENGAL.

as my concern in the sufferings of those whom my selection for the most important trusts in your service has exposed to persecution, and to censures, fines, deprivations, and dismission from home. It is hard to be loaded with a weighty responsibility without power, to be compelled to work with instruments which I cannot trust, and to see the terrors of high authority held over the heads of such as I myself employ in the discharge of my public duties.*

In another letter he stated, that during a period of five years the Supreme Government had maintained a continued and desperate state of war in every part of India.

We have supported the other presidencies, not by scanty and ineffectual supplies, but by an anxious anticipation of all their wants, and by a most prompt and liberal relief of them. We have assisted the China trade, and have provided larger investments from the Presidency than it has ever furnished in any given period of the same length, from the first hour of its establishment to the present, and ample returns of wealth have been sent to England at a time when all the Company's possessions in India were bearing with accumulated weight on Bengal for support against native and European enemies.

Anticipating a termination of hostilities with Tippoo, from the state of all parties opposed to him, he adverted to the Company's political relations with their two principal allies, the Nabob of the Carnatic and the Vizier of Oude, and observed that they both groaned under the yoke of the most oppressive servitude, no less injurious to the Company's interests than to credit, faith, and

* November 1783.

and justice. "I have contended against it by every means in my power, but without effect,"* alluding to the removal of his own agent, and the substitution of Mr. Bristow under the views of the Court and the majority of the Council. 1783. BENGAL.

* Letter, December 1783.

CHAPTER XII.

1783. Proceedings in Parliament and Mr. Fox's India Bill.

WHILE the Company were contending with such fearful adversaries abroad, they were doomed to experience the assaults of still more powerful enemies at home, whose formidable attack, had it succeeded, would have effected their annihilation. The rapid succession of changes that had taken place in the Ministry, precluded any permanent agreement with the Company.

Lord North retired from his Majesty's Councils in March 1782, being succeeded by the Marquis of Rockingham, as premier, whose lamented death, occasioned by influenza, the then prevailing disease, occurred in the following July. Earl Shelburne, contrary to the expectation of Mr. Fox, became prime minister, and Mr. Pitt chancellor of the exchequer. Mr. Fox entered the lists of decided opposition, until another ministry was formed in the spring of 1783, by his coalition with Lord North, on which occasion Mr. Burke resumed the office of paymaster of the forces, which he had filled under Lord Rockingham's administration.

All

1783.

Proceedings in Parliament.

All parties were agreed that some change was called for. Mr. Dundas, whose laborious researches connected with the enquiry into the causes of the war in the Carnatic had enabled him to acquire such extensive information on subjects relating to India, and who had prepared the reports which exhibited so much talent, obtained leave to bring in a bill for the better government of that country. It was submitted to the House in April, 1783. It proposed to give a controlling power to the Governor-general over the other presidencies, with authority to act in opposition to his council, upon his sole responsibility. The rights of the zemindars and ryots were to be enquired into, it being strongly suspected that those of the latter had been greatly infringed. The debts of the Rajah of Tanjore and of the Nabob of the Carnatic were to be investigated. Mr. Hastings was to be recalled, and Earl Cornwallis, upon whose character and qualifications Mr. Dundas passed a high and deserved eulogium, was proposed as Governor-general. The bill was rejected, as it was thought proper so important a measure should emanate from the Minister, with whom the responsibility of the plan would then necessarily rest. The King's speech from the throne at the opening of Parliament contained the following passage:

The situation of the East-India Company will require the

1783. Proceedings in Parliament.

the utmost exertions of your wisdom, to maintain and improve the valuable advantages derived from our Indian possessions, and to promote and secure the happiness of the native inhabitants of those provinces.

The pressure of business did not admit of the Minister taking the question up until the termination of the session. The recess was, however, occupied in concocting the celebrated India Bill. It appears to have been the joint production of Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke; the latter being the only member of the government, who knew much of the matter, before it came publicly forward: it was submitted to his revision, but the great and leading principles were considered, beyond all doubt, to have been those of Mr. Fox, who, it is represented, was so much taken up with its preparation, that he could attend to nothing else. The bill is alleged to have been the real secret of the unpopularity of the Coalition Ministry.

On the 18th of November Mr. Fox submitted his bill. He readily admitted the interest which the Company had in the decision, in a financial point of view; but he contended the country had a much larger interest. The dividends on the capital stock were £250,000 a year; but the duties derivable to the state, from its connexion with India, amounted to £1,300,000 per annum, and the interests of Great Britain would be involved in the administration of the Government abroad;

abroad; mismanagement would be to the last degree dangerous to Great Britain. 1783. Proceedings in Parliament.

He ascribed all the difficulty and distress that had occurred in India to disobedience of the orders of the Court of Directors. He referred to the vote for the recall of Mr. Hastings, as confirming the necessity of some alteration in the constitution of the Company. The whole continent of India was acquainted with that resolution, whilst the resolution of the Proprietors which secured him in the Government was kept back, so that he was in a place of eminence without authority, and of power without energy.

Thus the Governor-general, although deriving his appointment under an Act of Parliament, could dispute the power of the Courts of Directors and Proprietors, of Parliament, and of the King. The bills which he proposed had no retrospect; but he frankly declared, that it depended upon the readiness of the House to receive them, whether they should be retrospective or not: an intimation somewhat arbitrary, and inconsistent with an avowed desire to maintain the full liberty of the subject, yet coercing or tying up the mouths of their representatives.* At present, he observed, there was no connexion between the bills and Mr. Hastings. If influence should manifest itself on this occasion, the consequences might be alarming; no future governor would ever go to India without

* Parliamentary Debates, 1783.

1783. Proceedings in Parliament.

without looking to influence in that house; and if the day should come when the whole force of patronage in India should be employed for the purpose of creating influence in that House, what would become of India?

He thanked God, the influence of the Crown had been diminished; but in its most alarming and enormous state, it was nothing to be compared to the boundless patronage of the India government, if conceded to this House. Such were the grounds upon which he supported his proposition for vesting the political affairs in the hands of seven commissioners, to be removable only by the Crown.* He allowed that individuals might possess unlimited and superior abilities, with soundness of heart, and integrity the most unquestionable. Yet, if the dispensers of the plan of governing India had not a greater stability in their situations than a British ministry, adieu to all hopes of rendering our Eastern territories of real advantage to this country. Never was any reasoning more at variance with the proposition with which it concluded.

On the 18th of November in that year, leave was given to bring in a bill for vesting the affairs of the Company in the hands of commissioners, for the benefit of the proprietors and the public; and also another bill for the better government of the territorial

* *Vide* printed note.

territorial possessions and dependencies in India. These bills were subsequently formed into one, well known as "Mr. Fox's East-India Bill." The following is a brief outline of the nature of the bills, their objects, and the grounds upon which they were brought forward and opposed.

1783. Proceedings in Parliament.

By the former of these bills the whole government and management of the territorial possessions, revenues, and commerce of the Company, together with all the powers before vested in the Courts of Directors or Proprietors, was to be vested in *Seven Directors* named in the act, for four years.*

Nine Assistant-Directors, being proprietors of £2,000 stock each, were to be appointed, for the sole purpose of managing the commercial concerns of the Company—to act under the orders of, and be subject to the seven Directors before named.

All vacancies in the office of Directors were to be filled by his Majesty, and those of the Assistant-Directors by the Proprietors, at an election by *open* poll.†

The Assistant-Directors were to be removable by five Directors; the Directors and Assistant-Directors were to be removable by his Majesty, upon an address of either House of Parliament.

The Directors were to have authority to remove, suspend, appoint,

* The persons nominated to be Directors were, Earl Fitzwilliam, Mr. Frederick Montagu, Lord Lewisham, Mr. Geo. Aug. North, Sir Gilbert Elliott, Sir Henry Fletcher, and Mr. Gregory.

† This was a departure from the system of BALLOT which had existed: a system which is now so strongly advocated for electing members of Parliament.

1783. appoint, or restore any of the officers in the Company's service, either civil or military.

Proceedings in Parliament.

It provided for the speedy and effectual trial of all persons charged with offences in India, and for the prevention of all parties so charged from returning to India before an examination had taken place:—each Director was to enter upon the journals and subscribe his name, with the specific reasons for his vote on the particular case. A decision was to be had on any differences or doubts which might arise amongst the members of the Governments in India, within three months after the account should have reached the Directors. If any delay in such decision, their reasons were to be entered for not coming to a determination.

The Directors and Assistant-Directors were not to hold any office whatever in the service of the Company, or any place of profit from the Crown, during pleasure. The Directors were not disqualified from sitting in the House of Commons. Each Assistant-Director was to receive a salary of £500 per annum from the Company.

The second bill went to explain the powers vested in the Governor-general and Council by the act of 1773, and forbad the exchange, acquisition, or invasion of any territory in India; declared the acceptance of presents illegal; prescribed a mode for adjusting the disputes between the Nabob of Arcot and the Rajah of Tanjore, or between them and their British creditors; explained the powers of the Governor-general in Council over the other presidencies as to war, peace, and treaties; disqualified the agent of any protected prince, and all persons in the service of the Company, from sitting in the House of Commons during their continuance in such employment, and for a certain time after their quitting such service; lastly, it directed that all offences against the proposed act might be prosecuted in the courts in India, or in the Court of King's Bench.

The

1783.

Proceedings in Parliament.

The arguments urged in opposition to the bills were, first, the arbitrary defeasance of the chartered rights of the Courts of Proprietors and Directors, without a justifiable plea of necessity; and, secondly, the dangerous power lodged in the hands of the new commissioners.

The supporters of the bill, with regard to the first objection, referred to the Acts of 1773, depriving the £500 stock-holders of the right of voting, and to the Act of 1781, which, it was contended, all interfered, more or less, with the Company's chartered rights. On the other side it was alleged that, though some reform was necessary, the extent of the remedy went infinitely beyond the extent of the necessity; that the disfranchisement of the members of the Company, and the confiscation of their property, could only be justified by acts of delinquency legally established. It was replied, that the bill vested it in the Company in trust for the sole benefit of the Proprietors.

But to whom, it was asked, were the Proprietors to apply for relief, in cases of the grossest abuse of the trust? It could only be to Parliament; where, in any dispute, the corrupt influence created by the bills would readily procure to any minister a majority in his favour.

In support of the bills, accounts were brought forward to shew that the Company were on the verge of bankruptcy: whilst, on the other side, it was averred that these accounts were absolutely false;

1783. false; and another account was presented to the
Proceedings in Parliament. House, prepared by the Court of Directors, shewing a balance of nearly four millions in the Company's favour.

The second head of abuses brought forward related to the government in India. Three points were noticed as affected by the prevailing system: first, the independent powers of that country, against whom, it was contended, extravagant projects and expensive wars had been entered into by the Company, for the purpose of extending their dominions; secondly, the states in alliance with us, or dependent on us, towards whom a ruinous interference had been exercised, their rights invaded, aids and tribute unjustly exacted, and the enormous peculations of the Company's servants, and disorders and rapacity of the military; and, thirdly, our own territorial possessions, governed with the single view of transmitting wealth to Europe.

Although the evils were allowed to exist, still the picture drawn of them was deemed to be much exaggerated; but, whilst remedies were admitted to be necessary, a total change of system was most strongly opposed. It was insisted on, that the Company's despatches to India were, for the most part, consonant to policy and humanity; and, as a check upon any collusion between the servants of the Company and their masters, had been given by act of Parliament: by amending a few errors and supplying a few defects, a control might be established over the Company sufficient for the purpose of good government, without the violent demolition of its rights, as aimed at by the proposed

proposed bill. The argument most strongly insisted upon was, the creation of a new and unconstitutional power—a kind of fourth estate in the realm; and of the enormous influence it lodged in the hands of a minister for four years, which might, in the end, annihilate the power of the Crown and subvert the constitution. 1783.

The Company petitioned against the bill.

In the debate on the 27th November 1783, Mr. Pitt stated that he had pledged himself to the House, and to the world at large, to point out the tendency of the bill on every thing dear and sacred to Englishmen, to prove its inimical influence on the constitution and liberties of the country, and to establish, by undeniable evidence, the false and pernicious principles on which it was founded. The alleged bankruptcy of the East-India Company, he contended, was not proved. He described the measure as the boldest, most unprecedented, most desperate and alarming attempt at the exercise of tyranny that ever disgraced the annals of this or any other country. Alluding to Mr. Fox, he observed, "The right honourable gentleman, whose eloquence and whose abilities would lend a grace to deformity, has appealed to the passions, and pressed home the distressed situation of the unhappy natives of India, a situation which every man must deeply deplore and anxiously wish to relieve: but ought the right honourable gentleman to proceed to the

1783. protection of the oppressed abroad, by enforcing the most unparalleled oppression at home? Was the relief to be administered in Asia, to be grounded on violence and injustice in Europe?"

Mr. Burke's speech in support of the bill.

The celebrated speech of Mr. Burke in support of the bill, was made on the second reading the 3d December. He represented the rapacity of the Company for the extension both of power and dominion to be unbounded. He declared that of the states, with whom the Company had come into contact, there was not one which they had not sold, nor was there a single treaty that they had not broken.

The Mogul, the descendant of Tamerlane, he described as a personage as high as human veneration could look at; amiable, pious, and accomplished, in whose name money was coined, and justice administered, and for whom prayers were offered up throughout the countries we possessed; but he had been sold!

The Rohillas, the Nabob of Bengal, the Polygars, the Maharattas, the Pretender to that empire Ragobah, and the Soubah of the Deccan had been sold!

The people were declared to have been for ages civilized and cultivated by all the arts of polished life whilst we were in the woods, and if the passions or avarice of their Tartar lords had driven them to acts of rapacity or tyranny, there had been time enough in the short life of man to repair the desolations of war by the arts of magnificence and

and peace; but under the English Government all this order had been reversed. Alluding to Mr. Hastings, he described him as having been loaded for years with the execrations of the natives and the censures of the Directors, and although struck and blasted with resolutions of that house, he still maintained the most despotic power ever known in India. The conduct of the Company as merchants was ridiculed, and declared to be not a whit better or more judicious than their course as statesmen. 1783.

Had such been a true picture of the Company's proceedings, the measure for confiscating their property and annihilating their power, would have been richly deserved. Their longer toleration would have been a disgrace to the nation, and the proposition should have been passed as an act of homage due to its author, of whom it was remarked by one of his political friends when the bill was first laid before the House: "He may live long, he may do much, but here is the summit, he never can exceed what he has done this day."

Remarks on Mr. Burke's speech.

But what were the sober facts? The Company had been incorporated for 185 years. Whatever had been their management of their commercial concerns, they stood prominent as the first mercantile corporation in the world. Rival Companies in this and other kingdoms, had fallen before them, and the very arguments urged against them by their opponents afforded the strongest proofs

1783. of their good management; for it was stated their dividend amounted to £250,000 a year; but the revenue derived by the public from their commerce, was £1,300,000!

Supposing it to have been bad; was it likely that the measure proposed as a substitute would have produced more auspicious results? Was a committee of noblemen and gentlemen ignorant of the first principles of commercial matters, an instrument which promised to make things better or work more profitably?

With regard to the political branch of the question, the conduct of some of the Company's servants, high in station abroad, had laid the system open to strong animadversion, caused more by the want of adequate power to apply correction, than indisposition or insensibility on the part of the Directors to the evils that demanded their interference. Any one who may have taken the trouble to read the preceding part of this volume must have been satisfied that territorial aggrandizement or ambitious designs formed no part of the system which the home authorities laid down for the guidance of their servants. With regard to the conduct of their representatives abroad, their position was frequently one of great difficulty and embarrassment. It appears to have been the conviction of almost every succeeding government, from that of the great Lord Clive to the administration of Mr. Hastings, that it was impossible to fix a boundary

boundary, beyond which, under no circumstances, were they to advance, and within which the Company could have safely entrenched themselves. As to the observance of treaties, it was the unceasing desire of the Company to keep good faith towards every prince or chief with whom they had entered into any engagement. The great Mogul, of whom so transcendant a description was given, had in fact lost his kingdom. It had been torn by intestine commotions; his power and influence were mere names: he was subject to the will and caprice of his Vizier at one time, and at another to that of the Mahrattas, who possessed themselves of his person in order to advance their ambitious projects, and in conjunction with other powers, to overthrow the Company. 1783.

The conduct of the Tartarian invaders of Hindostan was declared to merit eulogy, when compared with that which had been observed by the East India Company, who were represented to have treated with such ignominy the illustrious descendant of the immortal Tamerlane!

History, unfortunately, has not left us ignorant of the facts, "The Tartars who poured into that unfortunate country, were generally soldiers of fortune, bringing nothing but their swords, with which they carved their way to dignity and empire. Power was their darling object, and they scrupled at nothing to obtain it."

The scenes of barbarity which accompanied the inroad

1783. inroad of this *immortal* Tamerlane, are almost incredible. The invasion occurred in 1397, when 100,000 persons were murdered in cold blood, on his advance before Delhi, and after he had entered that city, the barbarity was repeated to a still greater extent. So late as 1739, that fated city was again doomed to suffer all the horrors of a ruthless invader: Nadir Sha, having been fired at after entering the city, caused 100,000 human beings, sparing neither sex nor age, to be massacred. One Persian soldier was reported to have butchered a whole family, whilst numerous Hindoos, to escape the sword, shut themselves up with their families, and set fire to their houses, perishing in the flames.

Ahmed Sha, the Mogul, in 1749 had granted to Ghazi-ood-deen, the soubaship of the Deccan. Ghazi-ul-deen the Soubah's son being suspected by the Mogul of looking to the throne, the latter addressed the Jauts, urging them by promises of favour to aid him in supporting his authority as Mogul. The letter falling into the hands of Ghazi-ul-deen, he first deprived his monarch of sight and then of life. In 1760, Aulumghire succeeded, and raised the murderer, Ghazi-ul-deen, to the vizerat, who repaid his master's confidence by hiring two assassins, who murdered him, and then threw his remains out of the palace window! His unfortunate successor, Sha Jehan—the personage dignified by Mr. Burke as the descendant of Tamerlane

Tamerlane—had lost Oude, together with the allegiance of the Jauts and Rohillas. He had joined his vizier in attacking the Company, and being completely defeated, threw himself on their protection, which was readily extended, the Company's services being acknowledged by the grant of the Dewanny. In the natural desire to re-establish himself on the throne of his ancestors, the King wished to repair to Dehli, then in the possession of the Mahrattas, the avowed enemies of the Vizier, with whom we had formed an alliance. The Mahrattas were also most unfavourably disposed towards the Company. Contrary to the entreaties of the government, the King left the Company's army, and threw himself into the arms of the Mahrattas, to whom his Majesty granted the territories secured to him by the Company for his revenue; and the Mahrattas used him as an instrument for their own aggrandizement, scarcely supplying him with the bare necessaries of life, and lastly depriving him of vision! Such are the details of a nation, its sovereigns and invaders, within the history of the Company's time, who are nevertheless described as despoilers of the country, as faithless towards its sovereigns, and even worse than the ruthless butchers, whose atrocities have been fully described by various writers on Indian history. 1783.

From the sovereign we descend to the people, who were held up to Parliament and the nation as civilized

1783. civilized and cultivated by all the arts of polished life; but what is the testimony of an eye-witness, who had resided amongst them for years?

Grant's character of the natives.

They are a people exceedingly depraved, the natives freely ackowledge this of each other; they are in a most degraded and humiliating state. Justice with them is a traffic in venality. The domestic state was one of despotic life, the husband as lord, the wife a servant, and polygamy prevailing. The Hindoo writers and Hindoo laws place all reliance on vigilance and none on principle. The system one of imperious dominion, between seclusion and terror, whilst the universality of great depravity is admitted. The whole fabric was declared to be the work of a crafty and imperious priesthood, who feigned a divine revelation and appointment to invest their own order in perpetuity, with the most absolute empire over the civil state of the Hindoos. The Brahmins, by an ordinance of the Vedas, prohibiting the people from reading the sacred books. By the interposition of the Company's government, a stop was put to the *barbarous* practices of certain Hindoos, and sanctioned by their Shaster, in devoting the life of infants to the sacred waters; of certain Hindoos of high caste in Benares, who on a prospect of inability to provide suitably for their female children, were induced, not unfrequently, to put them to death; and of other castes of Hindoos, who with a view to deter the execution of legal process, or in revenge for a supposed injury, would murder their females or their children, under a persuasion that by such means they could command and direct spiritual vengeance against their adversaries. But in regard to immolations in the various modes practised by self-devoted victims, who are invariably Hindoos, no further interference is permitted to take place on the part of the magistrate, than may be necessary to ascertain

tain from the party that the resolution has been voluntary and in no wise influenced by improper means.* 1783.

The state of justice under the native government was described as an instrument of power rather than of justice, not only unavailing to protect the people, but often the means of the most grievous oppression under the cloak of judicial character.

The late Lord Teignmouth, when Mr. Shore, at the period of these parliamentary discussions made the following remark:

"When we consider the nature and magnitude of this acquisition (the Dewanny), the character of the people placed under our dominion, their difference of language, and dissimilarity of manners, that we entered upon the administration of the government ignorant of its former constitution, and with little practical experience in Asiatic finance, it will not be deemed surprising that we should have fallen into errors, or that any at this time should require correction."

The bill passed the Commons, on a division of two hundred and eight to one hundred and two, on the 8th December, and was the next day carried to the Lords. Bill passes the Commons.

It had been remarked, that on the division, several of the members well known as the friends of

* This alludes to the practice of suttee, the suppression of which rite forms a distinguishing feature in the government of Lord William Bentinck, which will be given in the second volume of this work.

1783. of his Majesty, gave their votes on the side of opposition. It was, however, generally imagined that ministers were too strong to be affected, and it was deemed to the last degree improbable that they should have adopted a measure of such infinite importance, either without knowing, or contrary to, the inclinations of the King. The Company lost no time in presenting a petition to the House of Lords, similar in import to that which had been laid before the House of Commons; and here the appeal was more successful. On the first reading, which took place the 11th December, Earl Temple, Lord Thurlow, and the Duke of Richmond, expressed their abhorrence of the measure in the most unqualified terms. The second reading was fixed for Monday the 15th December. Various rumours began to circulate. It was confidently affirmed that Earl Temple had been ordered to attend the King, and that a written note had been put into his hands, in which his Majesty declared that "he should deem those who should vote for it, not only not his friends but his enemies, and that, if Lord Temple could put it in stronger words, he had full authority to do so." Circumstances which took place on the second reading of the Bill, on the 15th December, appeared to confirm the truth of the reports.—Several peers who had entrusted their proxies to the minister and his friends, withdrew them only a few hours before the House met, and others voted in opposition to him,

him, so that he was left in a minority of seventy-nine to eighty-seven. In the debate, on the question for adjournment moved by the Duke of Chandos, for the purpose of hearing counsel, Lord Temple acknowledged that he had been admitted to an audience of the King, and contended that, as a peer of the realm, he had a right to offer his Majesty such advice as he might think proper. He had, he said, given his advice; what that was he would not say—it was lodged in the breast of the King; nor would he declare the purport of it without his Majesty's consent, or till he saw a proper occasion. But though he would not declare affirmatively what his advice to his sovereign was, he would tell their Lordships, negatively, what it was not—it was not friendly to the principles and objects of the bill. 1783.

In the House of Commons, reference was made to the above-mentioned reports, and a motion was submitted by Mr. Baker, "That it is *now* necessary to declare, that to report any opinion, or pretended opinion of his Majesty, upon any bill or other proceedings depending in either House of Parliament, with a view to influence the votes of the members, is a high crime and misdemeanor, derogatory to the honour of the Crown, a breach of the fundamental privileges of Parliament, and subversive of the constitution." Lord Maitland seconded the motion: which was strongly opposed by Mr. Pitt, who, with reference to the criminality of

1783. of the facts which were the subjects of these reports, denied that it was criminal in any of the peers, who were the acknowledged hereditary counsellors of the Crown, to give his advice to the King, in any case whatever. After a warm debate, the motion was carried by one hundred and fifty-three to eighty. It was then resolved, that on the Monday following the House would resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to take into consideration the present state of the nation.

As a change of ministers appeared to be determined on, a dissolution of Parliament was consequently expected. Immediately, therefore, after these resolutions Mr. Erskine moved, "that it is necessary to the most essential interests of this kingdom, and peculiarly incumbent on this House, to pursue with unremitting attention the consideration of a suitable remedy for the abuses which have prevailed in the government of the British dominions in the East-Indies; and that this House will consider as an enemy to his country any person who shall presume to advise his Majesty to prevent, or in any manner interrupt the discharge of this important duty." The motion was opposed as factious, and touching on the undoubted prerogative of the Crown without any justifiable cause. A member observed, that the true meaning and intent of the motion was, "that it is necessary, for securing the present administration's continuance in office, that no dissolution

dissolution of Parliament should take place at present." 1783.

The motion was, however, carried by the same majority as the former. On Wednesday, the 17th December, the bill was rejected by the Lords, on a division of ninety-five to seventy-six. Bill rejected by the Lords.

A change took place in the ministry, Mr. Pitt was appointed First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Earl Gower President of the Council.* Change of Ministry.

A report being prevalent of an intended dissolution of Parliament, the House of Commons went into a committee on the State of the Nation, on the 22d of December 1783, and agreed to supplicate his Majesty not to dissolve the Parliament; urging, among other considerations, the necessity for "reformation in the government of the East-Indies at home and abroad."

His Majesty was pleased, on the 24th December 1783, to signify his acquiescence in the request of the House of Commons; and, in his reply, his Majesty observed, "the state of the East-

* On the 22d, Lord Temple resigned the seals of office, and they were delivered to Lord Sydney, as Secretary of State for the Home Department, and also to the Marquess of Carmarthen for the Foreign. Lord Thurlow was appointed Lord Chancellor; the Duke of Rutland, Lord Privy-Seal; Viscount Howe, First Lord of the Admiralty; and the Duke of Richmond, Master-general of the Ordnance; Mr. William Grenville and Lord Mulgrave succeeded Mr. Burke in the Pay-office; and Mr. Henry Dundas was appointed Treasurer of the Navy.

1784. East-Indies is an object of as much delicacy and importance as can exercise the wisdom and justice of Parliament."

A resolution having been proposed by Lord Beauchamp, and agreed to by the House, restricting the Company from accepting bills of exchange but under certain conditions, and another resolution moved by the Earl of Surrey for an address to his Majesty, praying that his Majesty would not grant the office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to any person, otherwise than during pleasure, before the 20th January, the House adjourned to the 12th of that month.

Conferences had been held between his Majesty's ministers and the Court of Directors, with the view of framing a bill to be submitted to Parliament for the future government of the Company.

Mr. Pitt's first bill rejected.

On the 14th January, four days after resolutions had been agreed to by the Proprietors, Mr. Pitt moved for leave to bring in a bill, "for the better Government and Management of the Affairs of the East-India Company." Such bill was accordingly introduced on the 16th of January 1784, and read a second time on the 23d; but, on the motion for its being committed, was lost: the numbers having been, 214 for, and 222 against the motion.

No sooner had this decision taken place, than Mr.

Mr. Fox gave notice of his intention to bring in another bill, "for the better Regulation and Management of the Affairs of the East-India Company. 1784.

On the following day, as an impression prevailed that a dissolution of Parliament would take place, Mr. Powys asked the minister whether he could pledge himself that the House should meet there in Parliament on Monday next. The minister was also called upon to give the House some satisfactory reasons for his continuing in office, after repeated resolutions had passed against him. Mr. Pitt observed, that although a minister continuing at his post after the House of Commons had declared him undeserving of their confidence was novel and extraordinary, yet it was by no means unconstitutional. He conceived that, by the constitution, neither the appointment or removal of a minister rested with that House. That he neither could or ought to remain long in such a situation; but it behoved him to consider who were likely to be his successors; and he was bound in honour and duty so far to support the prerogative of the Crown, as not to quit a situation because it was become difficult or dangerous, till he saw some prospect of its being filled in a manner more acceptable to all the parties concerned. Proceedings in Parliament.

Mr. Pitt declining to resign, either virtually or actually, as a preliminary to a negociation: in the

1784. the House of Lords, on the 4th of February, Lord Effingham brought forward a motion, declaring "that, according to the known principles of this excellent constitution, the undoubted authority of appointing to the great offices of the executive government is solely vested in his Majesty, and that this House has every reason to place the firmest reliance in his Majesty's wisdom in the exercise of this prerogative." It passed without a division; and an address founded thereon, was presented to the King.

Letter from the King to Mr. Pitt.

His Majesty wrote to Mr. Pitt on the day this address was expected to be moved in the House of Lords. After lamenting the length to which the House of Commons had gone:

> I trust the House of Lords will this day feel that the hour is come for which the wisdom of our ancestors established that respectable corps in the state, to prevent either the Crown or the Commons from encroaching on each other. Indeed, should not the Lords stand boldly forth, this constitution must soon be changed; for if the only two remaining privileges of the Crown are infringed, that of negativing bills which have passed both Houses of Parliament, and that of naming the ministers to be employed, I cannot but feel, as far as regards my person, that I can be no longer of utility to this country, nor can with honour continue in this island.

On the 11th of February, in a debate in the House of Commons, on the necessity of a ministry being formed which should embrace members of both

both administrations, Mr. Fox avowed his opinion that the House of Commons had, and ought to have, a real and substantial negative in the nomination of ministers of state. Mr. Pitt declared, that he would not recede from his former determination. He denied that there were any constitutional means to force him to resign; the proper method was by an address to the Crown. 1784.

During these transactions, addresses from the corporation and merchants of London, and from various parts of the country, were presented to the King, strongly expressive of their confidence in the ministers, condemning the violent proceedings of the House of Commons in consequence of Mr. Fox's dismissal from office, and promising support to his Majesty in the exercise of his constitutional prerogative.

Endeavours to bring about an amicable negociation being still persevered in, it was suggested that the Duke of Portland should be requested by the King to have a conference with Mr. Pitt, for the purpose of forming a new administration. This proposition was reluctantly acceded to by the King, who on the 15th February 1784 wrote to Mr. Pitt:

Further letter from the King to Mr. Pitt.

My present situation is, perhaps, the most singular that ever occurred, either in the annals of this or any other country; for the House of Lords, by a not less majority than near two to one, have declared in my favour, and my sub-

1784. jects at large, in a much more considerable proportion, are not less decided; to combat which Opposition have only a majority of twenty, or at most thirty, in the House of Commons, who, I am sorry to add, seem as yet willing to prevent the public supplies. Though I certainly have never much valued popularity, yet I do not think it is to be despised when arising from a rectitude of conduct, and when it is to be retained by following the same respectable path which conviction makes me esteem—that of duty; as calculated to prevent one branch of the legislature from annihilating the other two, and seizing also the executive power, to which it has no claim.

Parliament prorogued.

The attempt at a reconciliation of parties failed, and after various efforts to induce the ministers to resign, the King prorogued Parliament in person on the 24th March. In the speech from the throne was the following passage:—

On a full consideration of the present situation of affairs, and of the extraordinary circumstances which have produced it, I am induced to put an end to this session of Parliament. I feel it a duty which I owe to the constitution and to the country, in such a situation, to recur as speedily as possible to the sense of my people by calling a new Parliament. I can have no other object but to preserve the true principles of our free and happy constitution, and to employ the powers entrusted to me by law for the only end for which they were given, the good of my people.

Parliament dissolved.

The dissolution took place on the 25th March, and the new Parliament was summoned to meet on the 18th May.

CHAPTER XIII.

1783-84. BENGAL.

THE necessity for some revision in the system for governing India became daily more apparent. The Supreme Council pressed upon the Home authorities the extraordinary state of affairs at Madras, and remarked that the Court would have been prepared for the refusal of that presidency to carry into execution the repeated orders given for restoring to the Nabob of the Carnatic his country and revenues. The Supreme Government had issued orders for this purpose, on the alleged ground that the Directors had dissolved the treaty of April 1781, and that Lord Macartney had violated the conditions of the assignments made in the month of December following; yet, from the last despatches received by the Supreme Government from the Select Committee at Madras, it appeared that the Court had expressed a wish, in their letter of September 1782, that the assignment might be rendered effectual, and that the Nabob and the Bengal Government should be called upon to effect that object.

The Supreme Council dwelt upon the embarrasment and distress occasioned by the igno-

1783-84. BENGAL.

rance in which they were kept on these points, and represented that their authority was contemned by the other presidencies. They alluded again to the case of Mr. Sulivan, and to the Court's objection to his appointment as Resident at Hydrabad, which nomination had been conferred upon him on the ground of his abilities and integrity. In so strong a light did the Governor-general view the matter of restoring the revenues to the Nabob, that he submitted a proposition to the Council for suspending Lord Macartney and the other members of the Select Committee who had opposed the measure.

Mr. Hastings requested by Proprietors to remain in the Government.

Notwithstanding the opinion expressed by the House of Commons,* the Court of Proprietors passed a resolution on the 7th November 1783, approving of the conduct of the Supreme Government, and requesting that Mr. Hastings would not resign his office until tranquillity had been restored in India. It was the wish of the Court of Directors to have forwarded the resolution to India, but Lord North intimated that the affairs of the Company were immediately to be laid before Parliament, and that the transmission was therefore inexpedient.†

The despatch in which the Directors announced that result to the Bengal Government, commenced with

* *Vide* page 610.

† Proceedings of the Courts of Directors and Proprietors, November and December 1783.

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with a reply to the letter from Mr. Hastings regarding the Court's animadversions on his conduct relative to Cheyte Sing. They observed:

Court animadvert on Mr. Hastings' letter regarding Cheyte Sing.

We cannot pass over in silence the letter from our Governor-general on our resolution, bearing as it does the appearance of animadversion on the conduct of his superiors, not to be justified in his situation. The Court have not only an undoubted right, but their duty calls upon them to condemn any measures that shall appear of a dangerous tendency. The conduct towards Cheyte Sing was in our eyes liable to destroy *that* confidence so necessary to be preserved with the country powers; the Court, therefore, hoped by their marked disapprobation to prevent any recurrence of such a proceeding. After the resistance which the Rajah had made, no countenance could consistently be shewn him, nor was any measure for his restoration ever proposed. As the Governor-general's letter, expressed in such unguarded warmth, must carry with it the appearance of resistance to those whom it is his duty to obey, we consider him to have been in that respect very blameable.

The Court then observed:

Applaud exertions of Supreme Government.

We turn aside from this disagreeable subject to express great approbation at the extraordinary exertions of our Governor-general and Council to counteract the designs of our numerous enemies, and to furnish such large assistance and supplies for the Carnatic in its wasted and desolate condition.

It is to the abilities of our late commander-in-chief,* whose loss we sincerely lament, aided by your vigilance and support, we owe the preservation of that country, as the powerful irruptions of Hyder had disabled our Governor and

* Lieut. General Sir Eyre Coote.

1783-84. BENGAL. and Council of Fort St. George from defending the possessions of our ally the Nabob of Arcot.

We could have wished the treaty with the Mahrattas to have been less humiliating, but we are truly sensible of the difficulties and embarrasments you had to encounter, the jarring interests that prevailed, the situation of the Carnatic, and the burthensome expenses which combined to make it absolutely necessary to come to terms of accommodation with so powerful a body of enemies as the Mahratta states compose.

They then alluded to the India Bill which had been rejected by the House of Lords.

A Bill has lately been under discussion in Parliament, by which, had the same passed into a law, the Company would have been totally changed, and divested of all authority. But we are happy to inform you that, though the House of Commons passed this Bill, the House of Lords thought proper to reject it.*

Mr. Hastings proceeds to Lucknow.

The Supreme Council concurred in the expediency of the Governor-general acceding to a requisition from the Vizier, that he would visit him at Lucknow for the purpose of devising a plan of reform to extricate him from the embarrassments into which his affairs had been plunged. The troops were greatly in arrears, his debts were increased in the further sum of £500,000, and his country threatened with famine. Mr. Hastings left Calcutta in February 1784, on his way to Lucknow. Before his departure he forwarded to the Court a memorial from a committee of the Company's

* Letter to Bengal, 28th January 1784.

Company's officers, relative to their supercession by five officers in His Majesty's service. He expressed his sense of their merits and services; he felt it peculiarly incumbent upon him to become the advocate of the Company's army, as he had been an early and a nearer witness of its deserts than any other member of the Council. He had seen it in its infancy, and had beheld almost all the important services which it had performed in the progress of the Company's growing power; it had been the principal instrument of all the Company's acquisitions, and the means of advancing the British name to a greater height of splendour and renown through every part of India than that of any other nation known to it. 1783-84. BENGAL.

Mr. Hastings reached Lucknow on the 27th March 1784, and on the 30th April he detailed to the Court of Directors the measures that had occupied his attention. His first object was to effect a liquidation of the Vizier's debt to the Company; the second was to induce his ministers to appoint bodies of regular troops to ensure the collections and the internal defence of his country, thereby precluding the necessity for calling in aid, and releasing the Nabob from the charge of an extraordinary and undefined subsidy. Proceedings at Lucknow.

The third object was to put a final close to the disreputable and ruinous system of interference, whether avowed or secret, in the affairs of the Nabob, and the withdrawal for ever of the influence

1784-85. BENGAL.

ence by which it was maintained. The specie applied in supporting his own troops, would then flow back into circulation. If a profitable system of connexion with Oude was to be maintained the claims of the British Government should be confined to the line marked out; if it were transgressed, the distribution of patronage might be extended, and the fortunes of individuals increased, as well as the nominal riches of Great Britain; but, observed Mr. Hastings, "your own interests will suffer by it, and the ruin of a once great and flourishing country will be recorded. Justice and good faith cut off every pretext for your exercising any power or authority in the country, whilst the sovereign of it fulfils the engagement which he has contracted with the Company."

When at Lucknow, he hinted, in his communications to the Council, at a proposal for effecting a treaty with the Mogul, then at Delhi. The Council urged the necessity of avoiding any committal of the Company, which put a stop to the idea.

Mr. Hastings on treaty with Tippoo.

During his tour, he received intelligence of the proposed treaty with Tippoo; he immediately dispatched instructions with a new ratification of the treaty, accompanied by a declaration on the part of the Madras government, that they understood the Nabob of Arcot to be a party to the treaty, and desiring that the Council at Fort St. George should use their most strenuous endeavours with Tippoo to get his acknowledgment

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ment of the understanding. The Government of Fort St. George were apprised, that should they counteract, resist, or disobey the orders which they had received from Bengal, they would do so at their peril, and be responsible to the nation, to the Company, and to the Supreme Government.*

Lord Macartney rejects Governor-general's views.

The proposition for acting in accordance with the instructions from Bengal was rejected by the casting vote of Lord Macartney. The Court had already nominated his Lordship in succession to the government of Bengal, when Mr. Hastings should retire; but immediately they received accounts of this difference of opinion between the two governments, they dispatched the following orders to Madras:—

Court's orders thereon.

"We are sorry to observe the height to which disputes have arisen between our Governor-general in Council and the President and Select Committee of Fort St. George, insomuch as to create a suspicion with some whether the former may not have proceeded to the suspension of Lord Macartney, in consequence of his Lordship and the Select Committee's declining to comply with the orders of the Bengal government for opening a new negociation with Tippoo Sultan, to procure from him a declaration in the treaty respecting the Nabob of Arcot. We do not suppose such an event has taken place; but in order to guard against the possibility thereof, and to remove any doubts which may exist in the minds of any of our servants whether, after such a suspension, his Lordship ought to be allowed to resume the government of Madras, or to be admitted to the office of Governor-general of Bengal, we think

* Bengal Secret Consultations, 13th August 1783.

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think it right hereby to declare it to be our express order, that should such an event have happened (of which our late advices from Fort St. George express some apprehension), in consequence, as before observed, of his Lordship's declining to comply with the orders of the Bengal Government, for opening a new negotiation with Tippoo Sultaun, to procure from him a declaration in the treaty respecting the Nabob of Arcot, Lord Macartney be nevertheless allowed to resume the government of Madras, and be admitted to the office of Governor-general of Bengal, in like manner as if no such suspension had take place."

Interview with the Shah Zada.

Mr. Hastings was met at Lucknow by Prince Mirza Jewar Jehander Shah, the heir apparent of the Mogul. His object was to be enabled to return to his father's court with suitable attendants, and to have a jaghire equal to the amount granted to him during the administration of Meerza Nudjiff Cawn, and to be employed against the Seiks. In order to preclude the appearance of a distinction to which the Mogul's known affection for his younger son, Meerza Ackbar Shah, might raise some objection, he requested his brother might be employed in a similar service in some other quarter. Mr. Hastings being constrained to quit Benares, left his body guard to support the prince. The Vizier also agreed to allow him four lacs per annum. It appeared that the Mogul had received but one lac and a half for his support in the preceding year, and that it was the object of the prince to obtain some increase of allowance for his father. Mr. Hastings then explained

plained the feelings which had operated on his mind. He was persuaded that the Court would have experienced the same. 1784-85. BENGAL.

Or let it be, if it is such, the same weakness of compassion that I did when I first met the prince on the plains of Mohawer, without state, without attendance, with scarce a tent for his covering, or a change of raiment, but that which the recent effect of hospitality had furnished him, and with the expression of a mind evidently struggling between the pride of inherent dignity, and the conscious sense of present indigence and dependence. Had his subsequent conduct developed a character unworthy of his high birth, had he appeared vain, haughty, mean, insolent, or debased hy the vices which almost invariably grow on the minds of men born to great pretensions, unpractised in the difficulties of common life, and not only bred, but by necessity of political caution familiarised to the habits of sloth and dissipation, I could have contented myself with bestowing on him the mere compliment of external respect, and consulted only the propriety of my own conduct, nor yielded to the impulse of a more generous sentiment. I saw him almost daily for six months, in which we were either participators of the same dues of hospitality, or he of mine. I found him gentle, lively, possessed of a high sense of honour, of a sound judgment, an uncommon quick penetration, and a well cultivated understanding, with a spirit of resignation, and an equanimity of temper almost exceeding any within the reach of knowledge or recollection.

Mr. Hastings on our connexion with Oude.

On reaching Benares, after quitting Lucknow, Mr. Hastings again wrote the Court on the affairs of Oude. He trusted that the system which he had formed for the administration of that country would

1784-85. BENGAL.

would be followed up, and a principle of forbearance from interference observed.

I leave the Nabob's affairs in charge of agents whose interests, ambition, and every prospect in life are interwoven with their success, and the hand of heaven has visibly blessed the soil with every elementary source of progressive vegetation. If a different policy shall be adopted, if new agents are sent into the country and armed with authority for the purpose of vengeance or corruption, for no other will they be applied; if new demands are raised on the Vizier, and accounts overcharged on one side, with a wide latitude taken on the other to swell his debts beyond the means of payment, if political dangers are portended on which to ground the plea of burthening his country with unnecessary defences and enormous subsidies, the results would be fatal.*

Returns to Calcutta.

On reaching Calcutta in November, he received a despatch from the Court of Directors of the 4th June, strongly animadverting upon the measure of drawing bills on the home treasury in aid of funds for the investment, and desiring that the Government would take immediate steps to arrange with the holders of the bills, as the state of the Company's means, added to the prohibitory clause in the act of Parliament against unauthorized drafts on the Court, precluded their accepting the bills if presented. On the 22d November 1784, Mr. Hastings again addressed the Court, referring to his letter of the 30th March 1783, in which he requested that a successor might be nominated,

* Consultations, 31st December 1784.

nominated, and observed that the affairs of Oude had since detained him. 1784-85. BENGAL.

If the next regular advices shall contain either the express acceptance of my resignation of the service, or your tacit acquiescence, I shall relinquish my office to the gentleman who stands next to me in the prescribed order of succession, and return to England as soon as the ship *Berrington* can be made ready to sail. My constitution, though naturally not of the strongest texture, yet for many years retained so uniform an exemption from positive disorder as not to require one day of grace from my official employment, is now so much enfeebled by the severe illness with which I was attacked in the year 1782, that it is no longer capable in any degree of those exertions to which it was formerly equal, and which were at no time sufficient for the discharge of all the duties which my place exacted of me. Nor am I the only diseased part of it. It is itself distempered. Witness the cruel necessity which compelled me for nine months to abandon the seat of government itself (referring to his visit to Lucknow), and all the weighty occupations of it, to attend to one portion of its charge, which, under a sounder constitution, might have been better conducted and with fuller effect by orders known to proceed from competent authority to enforce them. I do not believe this government will ever be invested with its proper powers till I am removed from it, nor can it much longer subsist without them. I am therefore a hurtful incumbrance on it, and my removal, whenever or however effected, will be a relief to it. Intends to relinquish the Government.

At the close of 1784, the usual revenue reports were made between the months of February and September. The Revenue Committee forwarded a report from Mr. Shore, when on deputation to Patna, Mr. Shore on alienated lands.

1784-85. BENGAL. Patna, regarding the *alienated* lands in Bahar, amounting to 13,08,786 rupees. It being impossible for him, compatibly with his other occupations, to investigate the abuses to which the government was liable, he suggested the establishment of a regular officer of registry for such lands, in order that the extent of abuse might be discovered, and the recurrence prevented.

The Government entirely concurred in the suggestion, and nominated Mr. Bushby to the office. At the same time they entirely approved of the general mode recommended by the Revenue Committee for the new settlement for the year, "giving the preference to the zemindars in all instances where no immediate causes existed to render them ineligible. In the instances of known incapacity of the zemindar to manage his district with safety to Government, they adopted, as they proposed, nearly the same mode as with females and minors, which was to conclude the settlement in the name of the zemindar, but to vest in a dewan, or the most responsible and creditable of the zemindar's relations, the sole charge and authority to hold the same, under strict obligations, in his person and property, to a just discharge of the trust reposed in him by Government as well as by his principal; the order of the Court of Directors of January 1783, which limited the period of leases to one year, being attended to in all instances, the zemindar being continued in the lease

New Revenue Settlement.

lease of his district from year to year, so long as he paid the revenue with regularity, and otherwise conducted himself to the satisfaction of the Government. The Council referred to the correspondence with the Board of Revenue, as replete with much interesting information on the general question of the term for which leases should be granted, adding, however, that they had actually granted leases only for one year, the orders of the Court of Directors being their guide.* 1784-85. BENGAL.

Mr. Shore returned to Europe in January 1785, on which occasion the Government expressed the strongest sense of his merits and services. Mr. Shore returns to England.

Madajee Scindia had gained such an ascendancy over the Mogul, that he obtained for the Paishwa the high office of VAKEEL-UL-MULLUCK, which gave him a right of supremacy and control in the management of the Mogul's administration. The Mahrattas had long aimed at obtaining that office, as a favourite object of their policy. Madajee Scindia expected to be appointed Naib or Deputy.† Madajee Scindia.

The Court having pressed upon the attention of the Supreme Government‡ the necessity of diminishing the general charges of the public establishments, and of curtailing every unnecessary expense,

* Revenue Consultations, March 1784. Letter to Court, 1st December 1784.

† Letter, 17th Jan. 1785. ‡ Letter to Bengal, March 1783.

1784-85. BENGAL. expense, a secret committee of inspection was nominated in Bengal, to carry into effect a resolution that a reduction of all expenses be made, and extended as far as possible to every department, allowing to each a fair compensation for labour.

That all offices that could be dispensed with should be abolished, and no more officers employed in any office than necessity required.

That the salaries be proportioned to the duty and responsibility of each office.

Mr. Hastings wrote to the Court in January 1785, stating that some authentic advices* from England having reached him, he had determined to quit the government at the close of that month. On the 10th he again addressed the Court:

I conceive it now to be impossible for your commands to require my stay on the terms on which I might have had the presumption to suppose within the line of possibility: were such to be your pleasure, it is scarcely possible for your commands, on any subject which could concern my stay, to arrive before the season required for my departure. I rather feel the wish to avoid the receipt of them, than to await their coming; and I consider myself in this act as the fortunate instrument of dissolving the frame of an inefficient government, pernicious to your interests and disgraceful to the national character, and of leaving one in its stead,

* Major Scott, Mr. Hastings' confidential agent, was in Parliament, and the proceedings regarding the India bills had no doubt reached that country.

stead, such as my zeal for your service prompts me to wish perpetual, in its construction to every purpose efficient.* 1784-85. BENGAL.

Mr. Hastings delivered up the keys of Fort William and of the treasury to Mr. Macpherson in the Council-chamber on the 1st February. That gentleman succeeded as Governor-general under the provisions of the Acts of the 13 and 21 Geo. III., and took his seat on the 3d. From motives of respect to Mr. Hastings, the Council determined that the ceremonial of succession should not take place until the *Berrington* had sailed. A letter from Mr. Hastings, dated on board, the 8th February, announcing her departure, having been received at Calcutta, the proclamation of the new government was made with the usual formalities.

The administration of Mr. Hastings, although not distinguished by those brilliant achievments which marked the course of the noble founder of the British empire in India, forms an epoch in the history of the Company and of his country to which great interest must always attach, whether viewed in connexion with those eminent names that stand prominent amidst the principal actors in the checquered and trying scenes which so rapidly followed each other abroad, or with the state of parties at home, to whom the affairs of that country and the conduct of the Company's servants

* 10th January 1785.

1784-85. BENGAL.

servants presented such fertile ground for political differences: those differences being carried to such extremities as to lead our revered Monarch to make the communication to the minister which has been already noticed.*

Few public servants have been placed in more trying positions than Mr. Hastings. The very commencement of his government was marked by instructions of a character repugnant to his feelings, and which placed him before the British public in a questionable light. The negociations with the Mogul and the Vizier unavoidably brought his government in contact with the Rohillas and Mahrattas, and gave rise to those grounds of difference which occurred on the opening of the new government at the close of 1774. The parties selected for councillors had their minds prepossessed with the unfavourable views that had been formed at home regarding the conduct of the Company's servants. Their opposition to Mr. Hastings was systematic and unceasing. He endured with unshaken firmness a series of personal attacks, that partook of a virulence, equalled only by the subsequent conduct of his still more powerful enemy, in the origin and progress of the celebrated impeachment.

The lengthened period during which Mr. Hastings presided over the Company's affairs in India, may be designated as one of experimental legislation.

* *Vide* page 672-3.

lation. Measures devised by Parliament with the view of securing the rights and advancing the happiness of the people, failed of the desired effect from having been framed in ignorance of the laws, customs, and usages of the people to whom they were applied. The embarrassments consequent upon such a state of affairs naturally followed, until the jarring elements of a discordant system constrained the Legislature to enter upon a general revision. 1784-85. BENGAL.

The measure brought forward by Mr. Fox bore the stamp of a great and energetic mind, inventive but arbitrary to a degree, and would have invested the Legislature with a power unknown to the constitution. The East-India Company would have been swept away; their property taken without even the shadow of a compromise being offered, or an attempt made to soothe either objection or prejudice. It had the effect of uniting the Sovereign and the people against a majority of the House of Commons. Of this measure Mr. Burke, who so strongly charged Mr. Hastings with a thirst for arbitrary power, was a most strenuous supporter. His zeal helped it through the Commons, and it is said that he stood on the steps of the throne during the discussion in the Lords, anxious and agitated, and desirous to give every aid in carrying it through. The loss of the Bill was to him the loss of place, the pecuniary effect of which was not repaired until he became a pensioner on the

1784-85. BENGAL.

state in 1795. This circumstance is not adverted to with any invidious intention, for it was justly observed by Lord Macartney on the occasion, that a pension was a far more honourable reward than the maintenance of a sinecure office under a hypocritical pretence of having supposed duties to discharge.

Mr. Hastings reached England in June 1785: on the 28th of that month he attended the Court, and received the thanks of the Directors for his services to the Company.

Shortly after the opening of the Parliamentary Session in January 1786, Major Scott observing Mr. Burke in his place, reminded the House that Mr. Hastings had arrived in England some months, and he therefore called upon Mr. Burke to produce the charges which he had pledged himself to bring forward, and to fix the earliest day possible for the discussion of them. Mr. Burke replied by relating an anecdote of the great Duke of Parma, who, being challenged by Henry the Fourth of France to bring his forces into the open field and instantly decide their disputes, answered, "that he knew very well what he had to do, and was not come so far to be directed by an enemy." Various documents were moved for, and in the following year the House of Commons passed the resolution of impeachment, which extended to every act of a Government of thirteen years, civil, military, political, and financial.

In

In February 1796 the East-India Company granted an annuity to Mr. Hastings of £4,000 for twenty-eight years and a-half, commencing from the year 1785, when he arrived from India. This resolution was confirmed by the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, of which Mr. Dundas was president. It was that gentleman who moved the original resolution recalling Mr. Hastings, and who subsequently introduced the Bill with his recall as a part of it.* His signature was to the approval of the grant: it was not a hasty, but a deliberate act, for the original vote by the Company was £5,000., to which the Board could not agree. This is a strong presumptive proof that, whatever opinion Mr. Dundas might entertain of Mr. Hastings' policy, he did not believe him to have been in any degree corrupt. 1784-85. BENGAL.

After the lapse of thirty years from the period of Mr. Hastings' return to his native country, and eighteen from the termination of his impeachment, he appeared before the House of Commons to give evidence on the renewal of the Company's charter in 1813. It was a gratifying sight to witness the respect manifested by the Commons of England towards that venerable public servant, by the members rising simultaneously on his retiring from the bar at the close of his examination.†

Throughout

* *Vide* pages 610, 649.

† The Author was under the gallery of the House on that occasion, the Lord Chief Commissioner, now in Scotland, being

1784-85. BENGAL.

Throughout his eventful career, the East-India Company were his undeviating supporters. He appears to have cherished this conviction to the latest hour of his life. When only within a few hours of his decease, he wrote to a member* of the Court of Directors in the following terms:—

"Daylesford House, 3d Aug. 1818.

"I impose upon myself the last office of communication between you and me to inform you, that a few hours remain, which are to separate us from each other for ever. The infliction that must end me is a total privation of the function of deglutition, which is equivalent to the extremities of hunger, by the inability to take nourishment. I have called you by the only appellation that language can express me, '*Yar Wooffadar*,' my profitable friend; for such, with every other quality of friendship, I have ever experienced yours in all our mutual intercourse, and my heart has returned it (unprofitably I own), but with equal sentiments of the purest affection. My own conscience assuredly attests that I myself have not been wanting in my duty to my respectable employers. I quit the world, and their service, to which I shall conceive myself, to the latest moment that I draw my breath, still devotedly attached, and in the firm belief that in the efficient body of Directors I have not one individual ill affected towards me. I do not express my full feelings;

being counsel for the Company. The opposing counsel, in the course of the examination, having asked Mr. Hastings how he reconciled the evidence he then gave with an opinion he formerly entertained, he replied: "I do not come here to defend my inconsistencies, but to declare what my opinion is, formed on mature reflection."

* The late Colonel Toone.

feelings; I believe them all to be kindly, generously disposed towards me; and to the larger and constituent body I can only express a hope, that if there are any of a different sentiment, the number is but few; for they have supported me, when I thought myself abandoned by all other powers, from whom I ever thought myself entitled to any benefit. My latest prayers shall be offered for their service for that of my beloved country, and for that also whose interest both have so long committed to my partial guardianship, and for which I feel a sentiment in my departing hours, not alien from that which is due from every subject to its own." 1784-85. BENGAL.

It appears, in the correspondence which passed between Mr. Burke and Dr. French Laurence, the civilian, who was counsel to the managers of the impeachment (a circumstance which led to his introduction to Mr. Burke, and subsequently to a seat in Parliament), that Mr. Burke, even at the close of his life, when suffering under severe domestic affliction in the loss of his son, still retained the strongest feeling against Mr. Hastings, and the idea that he was to be rewarded with a peerage seems literally to have haunted his imagination. The only honour conferred upon Mr. Hastings was that of being made a privy councillor a short time before his death. He appears to have possessed great moral courage, and a vigorous mind; to have been simple and unostentatious in manner, and sensibly alive to kindness. He had a perfect knowledge of the languages, laws, customs, and manners of the people of India. He improved its revenues; he increased

1784-85. BENGAL.

increased its resources, and extended the influence of the British power.

In January 1820, a proposition was submitted to the Court of Proprietors, to place his statue in the General Court-room at the India-House. The motion originated with the Chairman,* who, after expatiating upon the services of Mr. Hastings, asked:

"How were those great services rewarded? He was not allowed even to repose in dignified retirement—but was dragged forward to contend with public accusations, and rewarded with twen y-two articles of impeachment. It was not his intention to enter into any examination of the conduct of Parliament on that occasion—he meant not to impugn its wisdom in instituting the proceedings which distressed and harassed the feelings of that great man—they were at an end, the feelings which excited them and that great man himself were now no more! but this he thought himself allowed to say, that those proceedings were contrary to the practice and spirit of the laws of this happy nation."

The Deputy Chairman† stated:

That part of his life had been passed on the spot in India when the government was placed in the hands of Mr. Hastings. He never seconded a motion in the propriety of which his mind and disposition more strongly coincided.

It was

Resolved, That as the last testimony of approbation of the long, zealous, and successful services of the late Right Honourable Warren Hastings, in maintaining without diminution the British possessions in India against the combined efforts

* Campbell Marjoribanks, Esq.

† The late Sir George (then Mr.) Robinson, Bart.

efforts of European, Mahomedan, and Mahratta enemies, the statue of that distinguished servant of the East-India Company be placed among the statesmen and heroes who have contributed in their several stations to the recovery, preservation, and security of the British power and authority in India. 1784-85. BENGAL.

In closing this volume it may be remarked, that although the East-India Company had been incorporated nearly two centuries, it was during the last ten years only of the period comprised in the preceding pages that Parliament had legislated for the direction of their affairs. Within that time,

A regular Government had been established in India.

A Supreme Court of Judicature had been instituted.

The Receipt of Presents had been prohibited.

The Rate of Interest had been defined.

Rules, Ordinances, and Regulations had been ordained.

Justices of the Peace had been appointed.

Appeals had been provided for to the King in Council.

The King had authority to disapprove of Dispatches from the Court of Directors to India.

The Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court had been defined; and

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The Natives were secured in their Religion, Laws, and Usages.

But something more was required. The discussions which occurred in 1783, awakened the public mind to the affairs of India. The great and essential provision still wanting in the system was the existence of a controlling power, competent to give effect to such measures as should be clearly beneficial, when determined upon.

The Sovereign,
The Parliament,
The Court of Directors and
The Court of Proprietors,

were each possessed of separate and independent powers, which if exercised by either might render any measure nugatory, although based on the wisest principles of government, and calculated to ensure the greatest possible benefit to this country and to India.

The Crown might disapprove a proposed dispatch by the Court of Directors, or it might amend it; but when so amended, could not enforce its transmission to India.

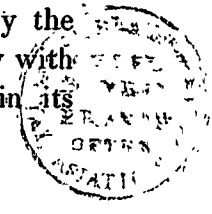
The Parliament might vote a declaratory resolution, but it had not the means of giving it effect.

The Court of Directors might prepare a dispatch, and the Crown might fully approve of it; but the Proprietors might prohibit its being forwarded.

Such a state of things called loudly for some remedy.

remedy. The difficulty was to devise a scheme which should preserve the East-India Company, who had been found a valuable instrument in administering the affairs of India, and at the same time infuse a vigour into the system, and impart a power to some constituted branch of it, which should be effectual for all the purposes of good government, without endangering the constitution. 1784-85. BENGAL.

How far the object was attained, will be seen in the measure submitted to Parliament by the Minister, and ultimately passed into a law with the concurrence of all parties interested in its completion.



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